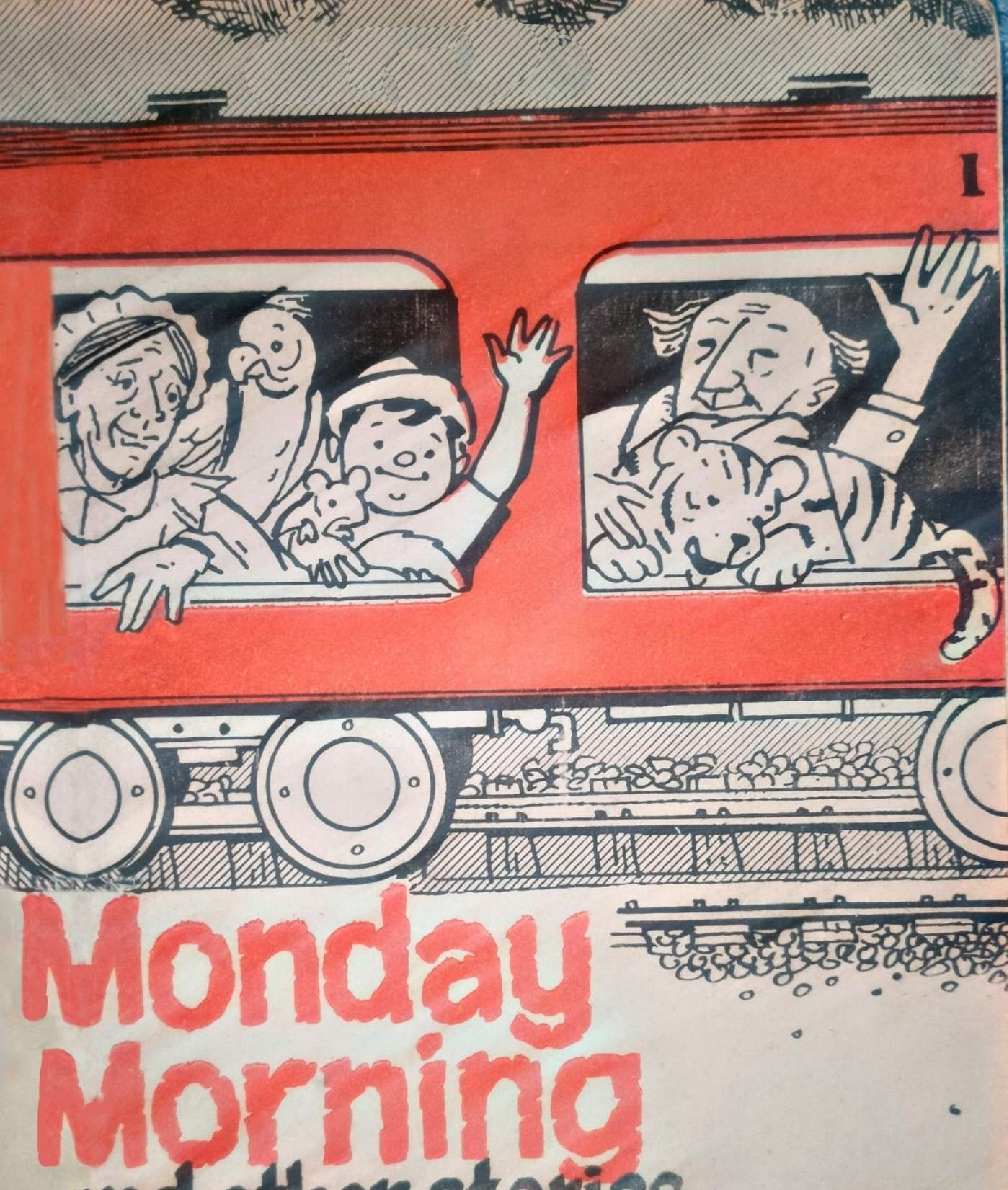

Monday Morning and other stories

(supplementary Reader) Book II

Class VI

ImRan Khan

ENGLISH-NONDETAILS

Monday Morning and other stories

Supplementary Reader - II

(English Medium)

Class VI

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Untouchability is a sin **Untouchability is irrational**

Untouchability is a crime **Untouchability is inhuman**

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—o—

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—O—

OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM

FULL VERSION

Jana gana mana adhinayaka jaya he
Bharatha bhagya-vidhata
Punjab Sindhu Gujaratha Maratha
Dravida Utkala Banga,

Vindhya Himachala Jamuna Ganga
Uchchala jaladhi taranga,

Tava shubha name jage
Tava shubha asisha mange
Gae tava jaya gatha,

jana gana mangala-dayaka jaya he,
Bharatha bhagya-vidhata,

jaya he, jaya he, jaya he,
Jaya jaya jaya jaya he,

SHORT VERSION

Jang gana mana adhinayaka jaya he
Bharatha bhagya-vidhata

Jaya he, jaya he, jaya he,
Jaya jaya jaya jaya he.

PLEDGE

"India is my country, all Indians are my brothers and sisters.

I love my country, and I am proud of its rich and varied heritage. I shall always strive to be worthy of it.

I shall give my parents, teachers and all elders respect, and treat everyone with courtesy.

To my country and my people, I pledge my devotion. In their well-being and prosperity alone lies my happiness."

—o—

1. THE BRAVE POTTER

It was dark. Thick black clouds covered the evening sky. The thunder roared and the strong wind shook the trees in the forest. Soon it was raining heavily.

An old tiger ran through the rain looking for shelter[1]. He was wet and cold and his cave was a long way. While hurrying to his shelter he saw an old hut. With a sigh of relief the tiger crawled under the thatched roof and lay down by the door. Then he heard the voice of a woman.

'Oh, how terrible this leak[2] is!' the woman complained. 'How terrible! I would rather meet a tiger in the forest than have this leak in my house!'

'A leak?' the tiger thought. 'What is a leak? It must be very dangerous and strong or the woman would not be more frightened of the leak than of me. I wonder what a leak looks like...?'

Soon afterwards the tired tiger fell asleep. He was suddenly awakened by an angry voice shouting in his ear. He felt heavy blows fall upon his head and shoulders.

'You horrible beast!' a voice screamed[3] angrily. 'How dare you run away! How dare you make me walk about in the middle of the night trying to find you!

---

1. shelter : protection
2. leak : small hole through which liquid escapes
3. scream : (here) say in a loud voice

Be careful, one of these days I'll kill you ! Now, go home ! '

The old tiger shivered. 'This must be the leak who has come out of the hut. I'd better do as he says or he will kill me. '

So the tiger allowed himself to be bound around the neck with a thick rope. The mysterious[4] creature then climbed on to the tiger's back and pulled at the rope. 'Come on, head for home ! ' shouted the voice. The tiger felt a sharp kick on his side. The tiger was terrified and he ran through the dark forest. Soon they stopped in front of a small hut on the edge of the thick forest. The creature climbed down from the tiger's back and bound him with an iron chain to a nearby tree. Then he went inside the hut. The tiger could not free himself from the chain; so he had to spend a miserable[5] night under the tree.

On the afternoon of that day, a potter had arrived home after a hard day's work. He was tired and thirsty. He had asked his wife for some palm-wine[6]. The more he drank, the better he felt. When he had drunk all the wine he no longer felt tired. When the storm began the potter suddenly remembered that he had left his donkey tied under a tree. He rushed out of his hut to take the animal into the stable. But the donkey was not there anymore — the only thing left was its chain !

'My stupid donkey must have run off into the forest', he grumbled[7]. 'When I catch him I'll give him a good beating ! '

4.	mysterious :	unknown
5.	miserable :	very unhappy
6.	palm-wine :	a drink made of liquid from the palm tree
7.	grumble :	complain

The potter walked through the wet forest. When it became dark he often stumbled over roots and fallen branches. With each step the potter felt more and more angry with his donkey.

‘ When I catch him I’ll tie him up under the tree all night,’ he muttered[8] to himself.

Hours later, the potter reached the old woman’s hut. There he saw an animal sleeping in front of the door.

‘ There he is ! ’ he shouted. ‘ There he is, the stupid animal ! ’

The drunken potter did not notice the difference between the donkey and the tiger. He kicked and beat the sleeping tiger. He then jumped on to the frightened animal’s back, rode it home, and then tied it up with the iron chain.

Next morning the villagers who passed the potter’s house looked in amazement[9] at the tiger tied to the tree. Soon the news spread throughout the village that the potter had caught a tiger and tied it to a tree in his yard. All the villagers praised his courage. They also thanked him because the tiger had eaten many of their goats and buffaloes. They had tried to catch him for many years but had failed. Of course, the potter said that he had done nothing of the sort. He said that he had only brought his donkey home. He did not understand how a donkey could change into a tiger !

---

[8] mutter : speak in a low voice

[9] amazement : great surprise

Nobody, however, believed the potter's story. Soon the potter became famous. Everybody, who met him, called him the brave potter.

A few years later war broke out between the potter's country and a much stronger neighbour. The king immediately gathered a large army. But he realized that it was not strong enough to save his country from defeat. He needed a hero to lead his army. Where could he find such a brave man ? The king hurriedly called his ministers together and asked their advice.

One of the ministers remembered the story of the brave potter.

'Your Majesty,' the minister said, 'I know some one who can lead our army.' He told him all about the brave potter.

The king immediately sent a messenger to the potter's house. When the potter realized that he had been made the general of the army, he became frightened. The king had ordered him to go to the palace the next day. How could he, a poor ignorant potter, become the general of the army ? He had never carried a sword, nor had he ever ridden a horse.

The next day he went with his wife to the capital. The king was pleased to see him and ordered the potter to lead the army into battle the next day. The enemy were not far from the gates of the city. A splendid house had been prepared for the potter and his wife. The horse which would carry him into battle was ready in the stable.

That night the potter could not sleep. He was nervous and worried because he did not know how to ride a horse.

'If I fall off everybody will laugh at me,' he thought. 'I will get up very early tomorrow and practise riding the horse.'

At dawn the potter woke up his wife and they went to the stable. They saw the beautiful black horse ready for its new master.

'Oh, how tall he is!' sighed the potter. 'I shall never be able to climb on to his back.'

'Put this bench beside him,' said his wife, 'and use it as a step.'

Even with the help of the bench the potter had difficulty to climb on to the horse's back. When he was to finally seated he found that the saddle[10] was very slippery. 'Please tie my feet to the stirrups[11], dear wife,to said the potter, 'otherwise I shall certainly fall off."

His wife found some rope and bound her husband's feet tightly to the stirrups. She then passed the rope underneath the horse and tied the two stirrups together.

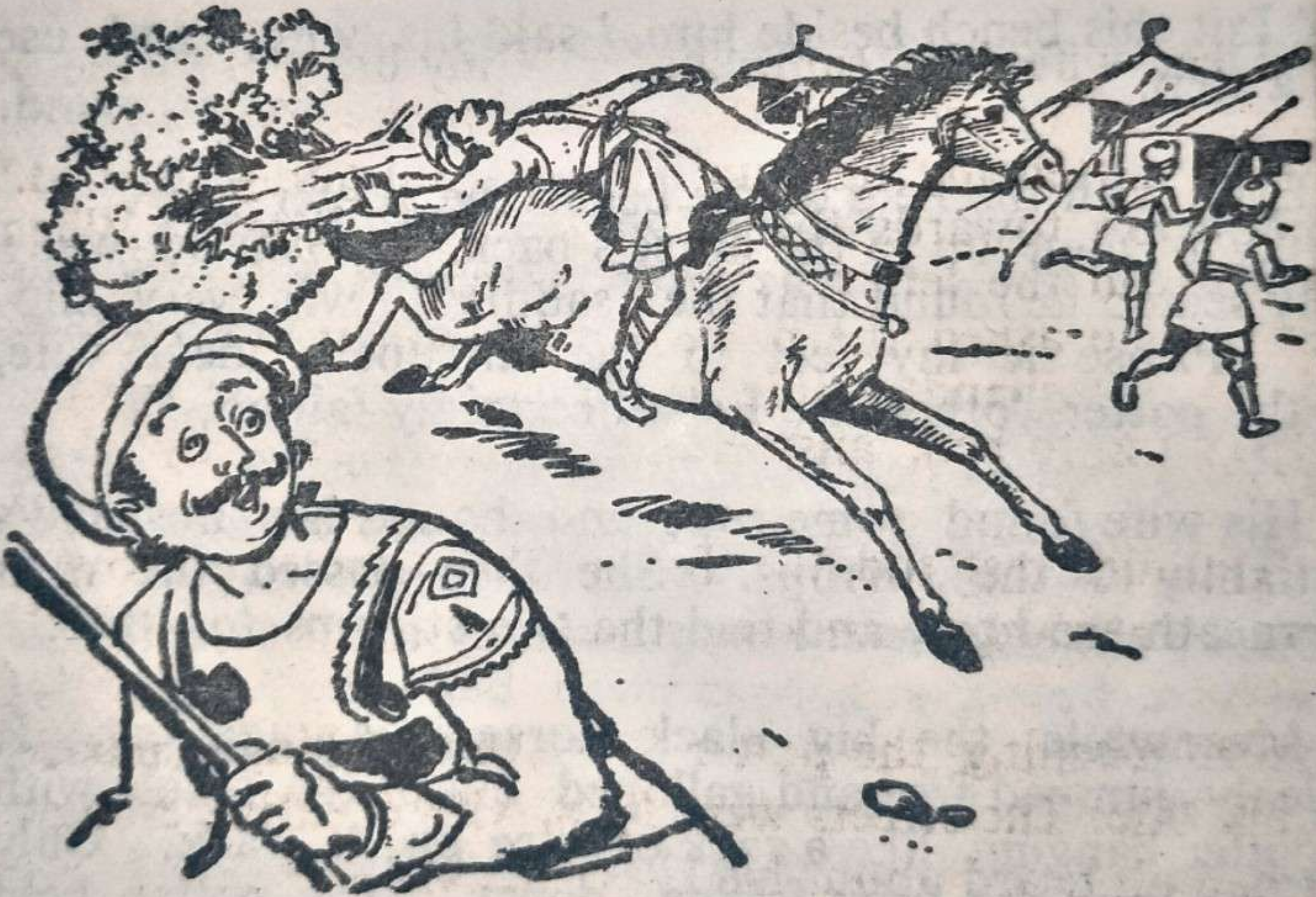
Meanwhile the big black horse was impatient. It suddenly jumped free and galloped out of the stable with the potter hanging like a sack of rice on its back. Only the ropes kept him from falling down. The potter held tightly to the horse's neck and prayed to all the gods to save his life. After galloping through the quiet streets, the horse crashed through the city gates and raced across the open fields. It leapt over fences and streams, and began to head for the enemy's camp. When the potter realized where they were going he tried harder than ever

---

10. saddle : leather seat fixed on a horse for riding
11. stirrup : foot-rest hanging from the saddle

to stop the horse. He pulled wildly on the reins[12] but it was no use ; the horse galloped on.

When they passed a young tree the potter grabbed a branch. But the horse did not stop. Instead, the tree was pulled out of the ground. A sentry from the enemy camp saw the potter galloping towards the camp with a tree in one hand and his reins in the other. 'That must be the general who captured a tiger with his bare hands', he thought. 'Now he has uprooted a tree with only one hand ! He is not an ordinary man— he's a giant !'



'Run, run, save yourselves ! The famous Tiger-General is coming at the head of a large army to attack us. He has the strength of a giant ! He has uprooted a tree with one hand !'

---

[12] reins : leather bands used for controlling a horse

The frightened soldiers fled. Their king was left by himself in his tent. Hurriedly he wrote a letter begging for peace and apologizing for attacking the country. He left this letter in the tent. Then he jumped on the horse and followed his soldiers. When the potter's black horse reached the deserted camp[13] it stopped. With shaking hands the potter united his feet and fell to the ground. When he looked around he was surprised to find the camp empty. He looked in the king's tent and found the letter. The potter walked back to the city with the letter in his pocket. He went to his wife and gave her the letter.

'Dear wife,' he said, 'never in my life will I ride a horse again. Please take this letter to our king and tell him that the enemy has run away. I am going to bed.' His wife ran towards the palace with the letter. When the king read the letter he was full of praise for his new general. He asked the potter's wife where her husband was. 'My husband is tired, Your Majesty. The servants have put him to bed,' answered the wife respectfully.

'Let him rest today. Tell him to come tomorrow to receive his reward,' the king said.

Next morning the potter went to the king's palace, with his wife. The streets were filled with cheering crowds. They had all heard about his brave action.

'Look how humble he is,' they said to each other.

'Any other man would ride to the palace on a horse but he is walking like an ordinary man. He's truly a humble and brave man.'

---

[13] deserted camp : camp from where everyone has run away

The king rewarded the potter so well that he did not need to work again. The country was peaceful for the rest of his life and the potter never rode a horse again.

(*Slightly simplified from Marguerite Siek*)

Comprehension Questions :

Qnd ✓ 1. Why was the tiger afraid of 'the leak' ?
2. How did the potter catch the tiger ?
3. Why did the king send for the potter ?
4. Describe briefly how the potter climbed on the horse.
QII 5. What made the enemy soldiers and their king run away ?
6. How was the potter received by his king when he returned after winning the war ?
7. Imagine you are the potter. Describe briefly how you won the war.

—o—

2. ANIMALS ON THE TRACK

'All aboard !' shrieked[1] Popeye, Grandmother's pet parrot, as the family climbed aboard the Lucknow Express. We were moving from Dehra to Lucknow, in Northern India, and as Grandmother had insisted on taking her parrot along, Grandfather and I had insisted on bringing our pets -- a teenaged tiger (Grandfather's) and a small squirrel (mine). But we decided to leave the python[2] behind.

In those days the trains in India were not so crowded and it was possible to travel with a variety of creatures. Grandfather had decided to do things in style by travelling first-class. So we had a four-berth compartment for our own, and Timothy, the tiger, had an entire berth to himself. Later, everyone agreed that Timothy behaved perfectly throughout the journey. Even the guard[3] admitted that he was a very good passenger : no stealing from vendors, no shouting at coolies, no breaking of railway property, no spitting on the platform.

All the same, the journey was not without incident. Before we reached Lucknow, there was enough excitement for everyone.

To begin with, Popeye objected to vendors[4] and other people poking their hands in at the windows. Before the train had moved out of the Dehra station, he

---

1. shriek : cry loudly
2. python : large snake
3. guard : official incharge of a train
4. vendor : person who sells

had nipped[5] two fingers and tweaked a ticket-inspector's ear.

No sooner had the train started moving than Chips, my squirrel, came out of my pocket to examine his surroundings. Before I could stop him, he was out of the compartment door, running along the corridor.

Chips discovered that the train was a squirrel's paradise, almost all the passengers having bought large quantities of roasted peanuts before the train pulled out. He had no difficulty in making friends with both children and grown-ups and it was an hour before he returned to our compartment, his tummy[6] almost bursting.

'I think I'll go to sleep,' said Grandmother, covering herself with a blanket and stretching out on the berth opposite Timothy's. 'It's been a tiring day.'

'Aren't you going to eat anything ?' asked Grandfather.

'I'm not hungry — I had some soup before we left. You two help yourselves from the tiffin-basket.'

Grandmother dozed[7] off, and even Popeye started nodding[8].

'Well I'm hungry,' I said 'What did Granny make for us ?'

---

5. nip : pinch
6. tummy : stomach
7. doze : be half asleep
8. nod : bend the head down

'Ham[9] sandwiches[10], boiled eggs, a roast chicken, gooseberry[11] pie.[12] It's all in the tiffin-basket under your berth.'

I tugged at the large basket and dragged it into the centre of the compartment. The straps were loosely tied. No sooner had I undone them than the lid flew open, and I let out a gasp of surprise.

In the basket was Grandfather's pet python, curled up contentedly on the remains of our dinner. Grandmother had insisted that we leave the python behind, and Grandfather had let it loose in the garden. Somehow, it had managed to get into the tiffin-basket.

'Well, what are you staring at ?' asked Grandfather from his corner.

'It's the python.' I said. 'And it's finished all our dinner.'

Grandfather joined me, and together we looked down at what remained of the food. Pythons don't chew, they swallow : outlined along the length of the large snake's body were the clear shapes of a chicken, a pie, and six boiled eggs. We couldn't make out the ham sandwiches, but presumably these had been eaten too, because there was no sign of them in the basket. Only a few apples remained. Evidently the python did not like apples.

Grandfather shut the basket and pushed it back beneath the berth.

---

[9] ham : upper part of a pig's leg, salted and dried
[10] sandwich : meat, etc., between two pieces of bread
[11] gooseberry : small round fruit
[12] pie : dish of fruit or meat with pastry above it

'We mustn't let Grandmother see him,' he said. 'She might think we brought him along on purpose.'

I felt sleepy. Grandfather had begun to nod and the only one who was wide awake was the squirrel, still intent on investigating distant compartments.

A little after midnight there was a great clamour[13] at the end of the corridor. Grandfather and I woke up. Timothy growled in his sleep and Popeye made complaining noises.

Suddenly there were cries of 'Saap, saap !' (Snake, snake !)

Grandfather was on his feet in a moment. He looked under the berth. The tiffin-basket was empty.

'The python's out,' he said, and ran out of our compartment in his pyjamas. I was close behind.

About a dozen passengers had assembled outside the wash room door.

'Anything wrong ?' asked Grandfather casually.

'We can't get into the toilet,' said someone. 'There's huge snake inside.'

'Let me take a look,' said Grandfather. 'I know ll about snakes.'

The passengers made way for him, and he entered the washroom to find the python curled up in the washbasin. After its heavy meal it had become thirsty and finding the lid of the tiffin-basket easy to lift, had set out in search of water.

---

[13] clamour : loud noise of people shouting

Grandfather gathered up the sleepy, overfed python and stepped out of the washroom. The passengers hastily made way for them.

'Nothing to worry about,' said Grandfather cheerfully. 'It's just a harmless young python. He's had his dinner already, so no one is in any danger!' And he marched back to our compartment with the python in his arms. As soon as I was inside, he bolted the door.

Grandmother was sitting up on her berth.

'I knew you'd do something foolish behind my back,' she scolded. 'You told me you'd rid of that creature, and all the time you've been hiding it from me.'

Grandfather tried to explain that we had nothing to do with it, but Grandmother did not believe him. She declared that Grandfather couldn't live without the creature and that he had deliberately brought it along.

'What will Mabel do when she sees it!' cried Grandmother despairingly.[14]

My Aunt Mabel was a school teacher in Lucknow. She was going to share our new house, and she was terrified of snakes.

'We won't let her see it,' said Grandmother. 'Back it goes into the tiffin-basket.'

---

[14] despairingly : without hope

Early next morning the train steamed into Lucknow. Aunt Mabel was on the platform to receive us.

Grandfather let all the other passengers get off before he came out of the compartment with Timothy on a chain. I had Chips in my pocket, suitcases in both hands. Popeye stayed perched on Grandmother's shoulder.

Aunt Mabel, a lover of good food, immediately spotted[15] the tiffin-basket, picked it up and said, 'It's not very heavy, I'll carry it out to the taxi. I hope you've kept something for me.'

'A whole chicken,' I said.

'We hardly ate anything,' said Grandfather.

'It's all yours, aunty!' I added.

'Oh, good!' exclaimed Aunt Mabel. 'It's been ages since I tasted something cooked by your grandmother.' And after that there was no getting the basket away from her.

Glancing at it, I thought I saw the lid bulging, but Grandfather had tied it down quite firmly this time, and there was little likelihood of its suddenly bursting open.

We got into a taxi. Timothy got on to the back seat, leaving enough room for Grandfather and me. Aunt Mabel sat up front with Grandmother, the tiffin-basket on her lap.

'I'm dying to see what's inside,' she said, 'Can't I take just a little peep?'

---

15. spot : see, recognis

'Not now,' said Grandfather. 'First let's enjoy the breakfast you've got waiting for us.'

'Yes, wait until we get home,' said Grandmother.

When we got to our new house, we found a light breakfast waiting for us on the dining table.

'It isn't much,' said Aunt Mabel. 'But we'll supplement it with the contents of your basket.' And placing the basket on the table, she removed the lid.

The python was half-asleep, with an apple in its mouth. Aunt Mabel fainted away.

Grandfather promptly picked up the python, took it into the garden, and placed it over a branch of a guava tree.

When Aunt Mabel recovered[16] she insisted that there was a huge snake in the tiffin-basket. We showed her the empty basket.

'You're imagining things,' said Grandfather.

'It must be the heat,' I said.

Grandmother said nothing. But Popeye broke into shrieks of laughter, and soon everyone, including Aunt Mabel, was doubled up[17] with laughter.

(Slightly simplified from Ruskin Bond)

---

[16] recover : become well again

[17] double up : bend the body because of pain or laughter

Comprehension Questions :

Q1 1. What were the pets that travelled in the train ?

2. What did Popeye do at the Dehra station ?

3. How did Chips discover that the train was a squirrel's paradise ?

Q2 4. What did the python eat from the tiffin-basket ? How did its body show them ?

Q3 5. What happened in the train a little after midnight ?

6. Why did Grandfather come out of the compartment only after all the passengers had left ?

7. What happened when Aunt Mabel opened the tiffin–basket ?

8. Imagine you were one of the passengers on the train. Describe briefly what happened in the night when you went to the bathroom.

—0—

3. MONDAY MORNING

Monday morning found Tom Sawyer miserable. Monday morning always found him so — because it began another week's slow suffering in school. He generally began that day with wishing he had had no intervening[1] holiday; it made the going to school again so much more difficult.

Tom lay thinking. He wished he was sick; then he could stay home from school. Here was a vague possibility. He examined his system[2]. No ailment[3] was found, and he investigated again. This time he thought he could detect symptoms[4] of pain in the stomach and he began to encourage them with considerable hope. But they soon grew feeble[5], and presently died wholly away. He thought further. Suddenly he discovered something. One of his upper front teeth was loose. This was lucky; he was about to begin to groan[6] as a “starter,” as he called it, when it occurred to him that if he did that, his aunt would pull it out, and that would hurt. So he thought he would hold the tooth in reserve for the present, and seek further. Nothing offered for some little time, and then he remembered hearing the doctor tell about a certain thing that laid up a patient for two or three weeks and threatened to make him lose a finger. So the boy eagerly drew his sore[7] toe from under the sheet and held it up for inspection. But now he did not know the necessary symptoms. However, it seemed well worth while to try it, so he began groaning with considerable spirit.

---

[1] intervening : coming between

[2] system : body

[3] ailment : illness

[4] symptoms : signs of illness

[5] feeble : weak

[6] groan : make sound because of pain

[7] sore : painful

But Sid, beside him, slept on unconscious.

Tom groaned louder, and fancied that he began to feel pain in the toe.

No result from Sid.

Tom was panting[8] with his efforts by this time. He took a rest and then began to groan again.

Sid snored on.

Tom felt very bad. He said, " Sid ! " and shook him. This worked well, and Tom began to groan again. Sid yawned, stretched, then brought himself up on his elbow, and began to stare at Tom. Tom went on groaning. Sid said : " Tom ! Say, Tom ! "

No response.

" Here, Tom ! Tom ! What is the matter, Tom ? " And he shook him and looked in his face anxiously. Tom moaned out :

" Oh, don't, Sid. Don't shake me. "

" Why, what's the matter, Tom ? I must call Auntie. "

" No—never mind. It'll be over by and by, may be. Don't call anybody. "

---

[8] Pant : take quick, short breaths

"But I must! Don't groan so, Tom, it's awful. How long have you been this way?"

"Hours. Ouch! Oh, don't stir so, Sid, you'll kill me."

"Tom, why didn't you wake me sooner? Oh, Tom, what is the matter?"

"I forgive you everything, Sid. (*Groan*). Everything you've ever done to me. When I'm gone—"

"Oh, Tom, you aren't dying, are you? Don't, Tom—Oh, don't. May be —"

"I forgive everybody, Sid. (*Groan*). Tell'em so Sid..."

But Sid had snatched his clothes and gone. Tom was suffering in reality, now, so handsomely was his imagination working; and his groans sounded genuine now.

Sid flew downstairs and said: "Oh, Aunt Polly, come! Tom's dying!

"Dying!"

"Yes Auntie. Don't wait—come quick!"

"Rubbish[9]! I don't believe it!"

But she ran upstairs, nevertheless,[10] with Sid and Mary at her heels[11]. And her face grew white, too, and her up trembled. When she reached the bedside she gasped out[12]: " You, Tom ! Tom, what's the matter with you ? "

---

[9] rubbish : nonsense
[10] nevertheless : in spite of that
[11] at her heels : closely following her

" Oh, Auntie, I'm— "

" What's the matter with you—what is the matter with you, child ? "

" Oh, Auntie, my sore toe's mortified[13] ! "

The old lady sank down into a chair and laughed a little, then cried a little, then did both together.

This calmed her and she said : " Tom, what a fright you gave me. Now you shut up that nonsense and climb out of this. "

The groans ceased and the pain vanished from the toe. The boy felt a little foolish, and he said : " Aunt Polly, it seemed mortified, and it hurt so that I never minded my tooth at all. "

" Your tooth, indeed ! What's the matter with your tooth ? "

" One of them's loose, and it aches perfectly awful. "

" There, there, now, don't begin that groaning again. Open your mouth. Well—your tooth is loose, but you're not going to die of that. Mary, get me a silk thread, and a chunk of fire out of the kitchen. "

---

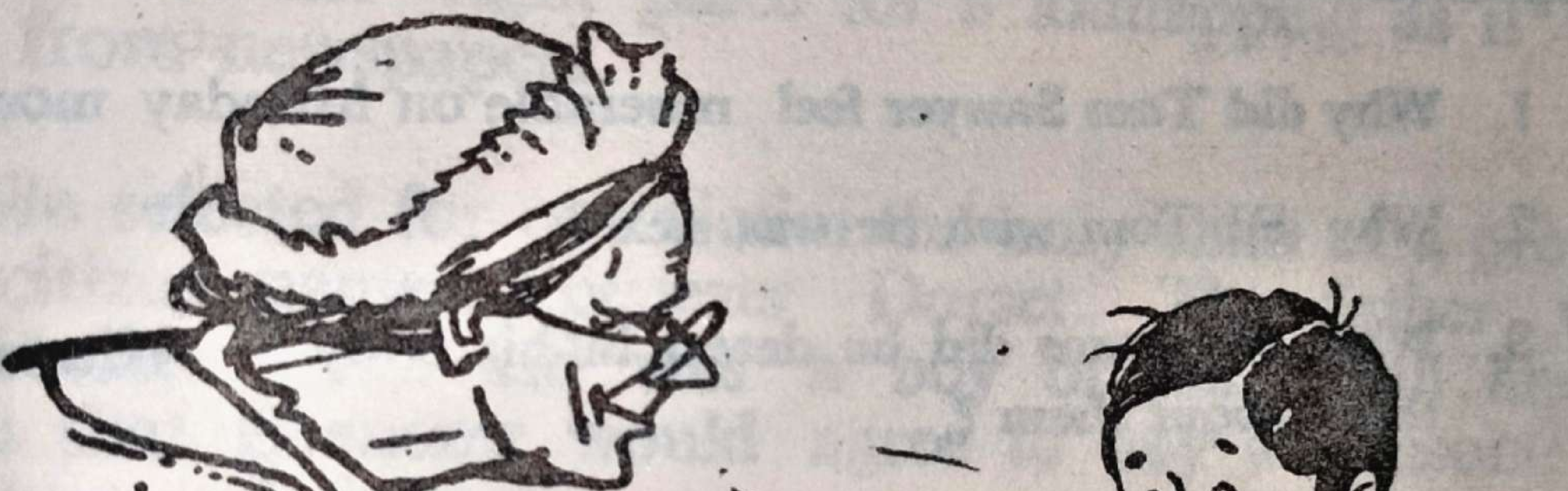
[12] gasp out : say breathlessly

[13] mortified : decayed

Tom said : "Oh, please, Auntie, don't pull it out. It doesn't hurt any more. Please don't, Auntie. I don't want to stay home from school."

"Oh, you don't, don't you ? So all this noise was because you thought you'd get to stay home from school and go fishing ? Tom, Tom, I love you so, and you seem to try every way you can to break my old heart."

By this time the dental instruments[14] were ready. The old lady made one end of the silk thread fast to Tom's tooth with a loop and tied the other to the bed post. Then she seized the pan of burning coals and suddenly thrust



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[14] dental instruments : (here) the silk thread and the chunk of fire

it almost into the boy's face. The tooth hung dangling[15] by the bedpost, now.

" Now that your tooth is out, Tom, you should go to school, " she said " You should not have frightened me like this. "

(*Simplified from Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
by Mark Twain)

Comprehension Questions :

1. Why did Tom Sawyer feel miserable on Monday morning ?
2. Why did Tom wish he was sick ?
3. What symptoms did he detect in his body ? What did he think about them ?
4. What made Tom think of the sore toe ?
5. What did Tom do to wake up Sid ?
6. How did Tom convince Sid that he was dying ?
7. Why did he stop groaning ?
8. How did Aunt Polly pull out Tom's tooth ?
9. Imagine you are Sid. Write a paragraph on how Tom frightened you on Monday morning.

—0—

---

[15] dangling : swinging loosely

4. THE RANSOM OF RED CHIEF

It looked like a good thing : but wait till I tell you. Bill Driscoll and I were down South in Alabama when this kidnapping idea struck us.

Bill and I had a sum of about six hundred dollars and we needed just two thousand dollars more. We talked it over and decided on a kidnapping project. Summit was the right place for a kidnapping as it was away from newspapers.

We selected for our victim the only child of a prominent citizen named Ebenezer Dorset. The father was respectable. The kid was a boy of ten. Bill and I hoped that Ebenezer would agree to pay a ransom[1] of two thousand dollars.

About two miles from Summit was a little mountain, covered with a thick cedar[2] growth. On the rear elevation of this mountain was a cave. There we stored provisions.

One evening after sunset, we drove in a buggy[3] past Ebenezer Dorset's house. The kid was in the street, throwing stones at a kitten on the opposite fence.

"Hey, little boy !" said Bill, "would you like to have a bag of candy and a nice ride ?"

---

[1] ransom : money paid so as to get a prisoner free

[2] cedar : a tree with sweet smelling wood

[3] buggy . carriage pulled by one horse

The boy hit Bill neatly in the eye with a piece of brick.

"That will cost the old man an extra five hundred dollars," said Bill, climbing over the wheel.

That boy put up a fight like bear; but, at last, we got him down in the bottom of the buggy and drove away.

We took him up to the cave. After dark I drove the buggy to the little village, five kilometres away, where we had hired it, and walked back to the mountain.

Bill was pasting plaster over the scratches and bruises on his body. There was a fire burning behind the big rock at the entrance of the cave, and the boy was watching a pot of boiling coffee, with two feathers stuck in his red hair. He pointed a stick at me when I came up, and said:

"Ha! cursed paleface[4], do you dare to enter the camp of Red Chief, the terror of the plains?"

"He's all right now," said Bill, rolling up his trousers and examining some bruises on his shins[5]. "We're playing Red Indian. I'm Red Chief's[6] captive, and my head is to be cut off at day break. By God, that kid can kick hard."

That boy seemed to be having the time of his life. The fun of camping in a cave had made him forget that he was a captive himself. He announced that I was to be burnt at the rising of the sun.

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[4] paleface : name used by American Indians for a European

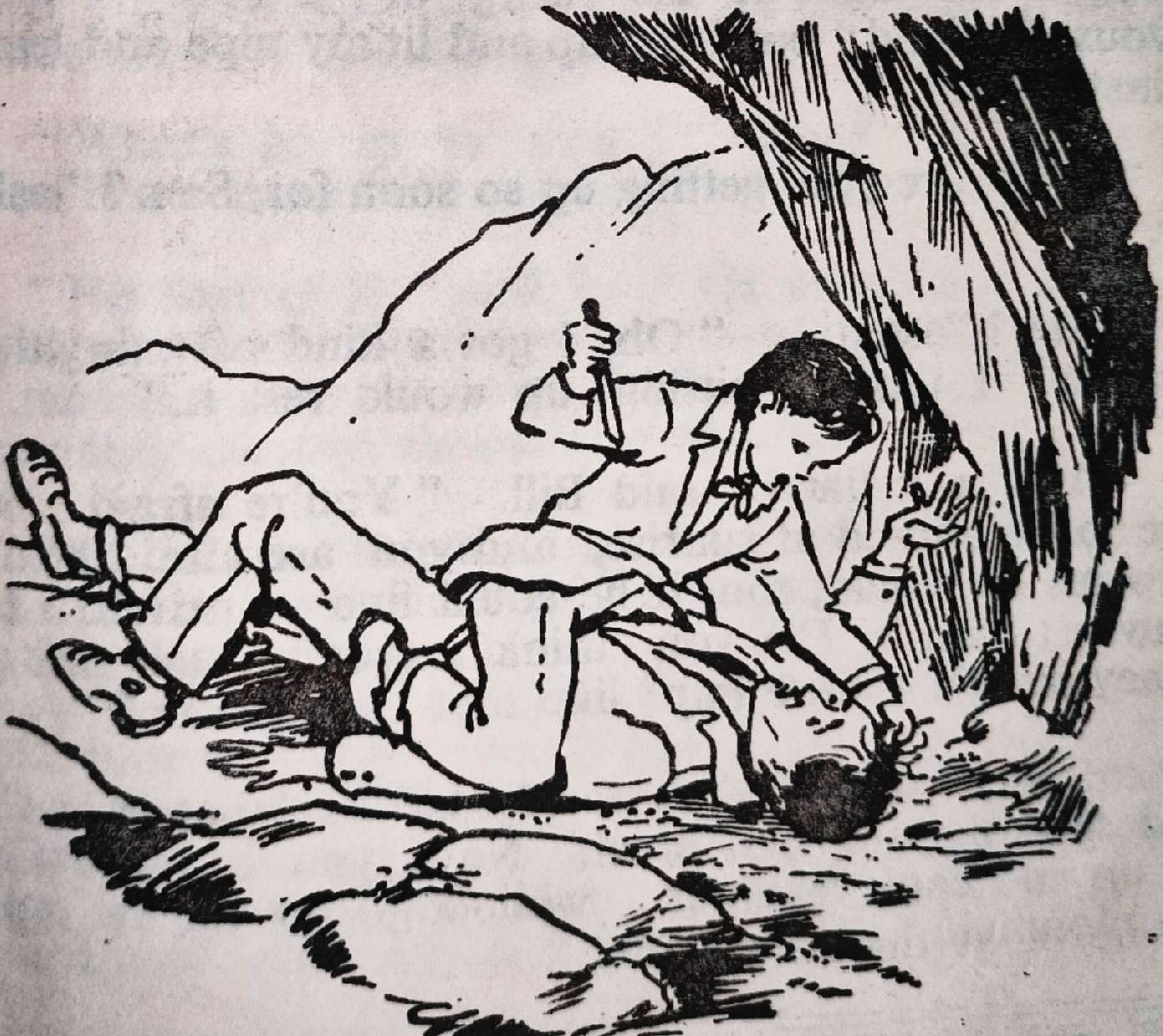
[5] shin : front of the lower part of the leg

[6] Red Chief : A Chief of the American Indians

" Red Chief, " I said to the kid, " would you like to go home ? "

" What for ? " he said. " I don't have any fun at home. I hate to go to school. I like to camp out."

We went to bed about eleven o'clock. We spread down some wide blankets and quilts and put Red Chief between us. We weren't afraid he'd run away. He kept us awake for three hours, jumping up and reaching for his rifle at the fancied[7] sound of a twig or a leaf. At last, I fell into a troubled sleep. Just at daybreak, I was awakened by a series of awful screams from Bill.



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[7] fancied : imagined

I jumped up to see what the matter was. Red Chief was sitting on Bill's chest, with one hand catching Bill's hair.

In the other he had the knife we used for cutting meat; and he was trying to cut off Bill's head, according to the sentence that had been pronounced upon him the evening before.

I got the knife away from the kid and made him lie down again. But, from that moment, Bill's spirit was broken. He lay down on his side of the bed, but he never closed an eye again. I dozed off a while, but towards sunrise I remembered that Red Chief had said I was to be burned at the stake at the rising of the sun. I wasn't nervous or afraid; but I sat up and lit my pipe and leaned against a rock.

" What are you getting up so soon for, Sam ? " asked Bill.

" Me ? " said I. " Oh, I got a kind of pain in my shoulder. I thought sitting up would rest it. "

" You're a liar ! " said Bill. " You're afraid. You were to be burned at sunrise, and you are afraid he'd do it. And he would, too, if he could find a match. Isn't it awful, Sam ? Do you think anybody will pay out money to get a little imp[9] like that back home ? "

" Sure, " said I. " A rowdy kid like that is just the kind that parents like most. Now, you and the Chief get up and cook breakfast, while I go up on the top of this mountain and look out. "

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8. stake : post to which a person is tied before being burnt to death
9. imp : (here) troublesome child

I went up on the top of the little mountain. I expected to see the men of the village searching for the kidnappers. But what I saw was a peaceful landscape.

When I got to the cave I found Bill backed up against the side of it, breathing hard, and the boy threatening to smash him with a stone half as big as a coconut.

"He put a red-hot boiled potato down my back," explained Bill, "and then crushed it with his foot; and I boxed his ears. Have you got a gun, Sam ?"

I took the stone away from the boy and patched up the argument.

After breakfast the kid took a piece of leather with strings wrapped around it out of his pocket and went outside the cave unwinding it.

"What's he up to now ?" asked Bill, anxiously, "You don't think he'll run away, do you, Sam ?"

"No fear of it," said I. "He doesn't seem to like staying at home. But we've got to make some plan about the ransom. Tonight we must get a message to his father demanding the two thousand dollars for his return."

Just then we heard some noise. It was a sling that Red Chief had pulled out of his pocket, and he was whirling it around his head.

I dodged,[10] and heard a heavy thud and a sigh from Bill. A stone the size of an egg had hit Bill just behind his left ear. He fell in the fire across the frying pan of hot water for washing the dishes. I dragged him out and poured cold water on his head for half an hour.

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[10] dodge : move suddenly to escape

I went out and caught that boy and shook him.

"If you don't behave," said I. "I'll take you straight home. Now, are you going to be good, or not ?"

"I was only making fun," he said silently. "I didn't mean to hurt him. But what did he hit me for ? I'll behave if you won't send me home."

I made him and Bill shake hands, and then I took Bill aside and told him I was going to find out what I could about how the kidnapping had been regarded in Summit. Also, I thought it best to send a letter to Ebenezer Dorset that day, demanding the ransom and dictating how it should be paid.

"You won't leave me long with him, will you, Sam ?" asked Bill.

"I'll be back some time this afternoon," I said. "You must keep the boy amused and quiet till I return. And now we'll write the letter to Dorset."

Bill and I got paper and pencil and worked on the letter. Bill begged me tearfully to make the ransom fifteen hundred dollars instead of two thousand. I agreed and wrote a letter that ran this way :

Ebenezer Dorset, Eso. :

We have your boy hidden in a place far from Summit. We demand fifteen hundred dollars for his return ; the money to be left at midnight tonight at the same spot and in the same box as your reply. If you agree to these terms, send your answer in writing by a solitary messenger tonight at half-past eight o'clock. After crossing Owl Creek on the road to Poplar Grove, there are three large trees about a hundred yards apart, close to the fence of the wheat field on the right-hand side. At the bottom

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of the fence-post, opposite the third tree, will be found a small pasteboard box.

The messenger will place the answer in this box and return immediately to Summit.

If you pay the money as demanded, the boy will be returned to you safe and well within three hours.

—*Two Desperate Men*

I addressed this letter to Dorset, and put it in my pocket. As I was about to start, the kid came up to me and said, "Could I play the Black Scout while you are gone."

"Play it, of course," said I. "Mr Bill will play with you."

"What am I to do?" asked Bill, looking at the kid suspiciously.

"You are the horse," said Black Scout. "Get down on your hands and knees."

Bill got down on his all fours. The Black Scout jumped on Bill's back and fixed his heels in his side.

"For Heaven's sake," said Bill, "hurry back, Sam as soon as you can. I wish we hadn't made the ransom more than a thousand."

I walked over to a village nearby and sat around the post-office and store, talking to people. One of them said that Summit was all upset on account of Ebenezer Dorset's boy having been lost or stolen. That was all I wanted to know. I posted my letter secretly and came away.

When I got back to the cave, Bill and the boy were not to be found. I looked around and called out, but there was no response.

So I lighted my pipe and sat down.

In about half an hour I heard the bushes rustle, and Bill came out into the little clearing in front of the cave. Behind him was the kid, stepping softly with a broad smile on his face. Bill stopped, took off his hat, and wiped his face with a red handkerchief. The kid stopped about eight feet behind him.

Bill said, " The boy is gone. I sent him home. All is off. "

" What's the trouble, Bill ? " I asked him.

" I had to ride," said Bill, " ninety miles. Then, I was given oats[11]. And then, for an hour I had to try to explain to him why there was nothing in holes, how a road can run both ways, and what makes the grass green. I tell you, Sam, a human can only stand so much. I dragged him down the mountain. On the way he kicked my legs black and blue from the knees down."

" But he's gone, " continued Bill, " gone home. I showed him the road to Summit and kicked him about eight feet nearer there at one kick. I'm sorry we lose the ransom."

" Bill, " said I, " there isn't any heart disease in your family, is there ? "

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[11] Oats : grain seeds used for food.

"No," said Bill, "nothing chronic[12] except malaria and accidents. Why ?"

"Then you might turn around and have a look behind you."

Bill turned and saw the boy. He lost his colour and sat down plump on the ground.

At half-past eight I was up in that tree well hidden, waiting for the messenger to arrive.

Exactly on time, a boy rode up the road on a bicycle, located the pasteboard box slipped a folded piece of paper into it, and went away again.

I waited an hour and then concluded that nobody was watching. I slid down the tree, got the note, and was back at the cave in another half an hour. I opened the note, got near the lantern, and read it to Bill. It ran like this :

Two Desperate Men :

Gentlemen : I received your letter today by post. In regard to the ransom you ask for the return of my son, I think you are a little high in your demands. I hereby make you a counter-proposition, which I am sure you will accept. You bring Johnny home and pay me two hundred and fifty dollars in cash, and I agree to take him off your hands. You had better come at night, for the neighbours believe he is lost, and I cannot be responsible for what they would do to anybody they saw bringing him back. Very respectfully,

— *Ebenezer Dorset.*

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[12] chronic : continuing for a long time

“What ! ” I said. I glanced at Bill, and hesitated. He had a very appealing look in his eyes.

“Sam, ” he said, “what’s two hundred and fifty dollars, after all ? We’ve got the money. One more night of this kind will make me mad. I think Mr. Dorset has made a liberal offer. You are not going to let the chance go, are you ? ”

“To tell you the truth, Bill, ” said I, “this kid has got on my nerves too. We’ll take him home, pay the ransom, and go away. ”

We took him home that night. We got him to go by telling him that his father had bought a silver-mounted rifle for him, and we were to hunt bears the next day.

It was just twelve o’clock when we knocked at Ebenezer’s front door. Just at the moment when I shou have been taking the fifteen hundred dollars from the box under the tree, according to the original plan, Bill was counting out two hundred and fifty dollars into Dorset’s hand.

When the kid found out we were going to leave him at home he started up a howl and held fast to Bill’s leg. His father pulled him away gradually.

“How long can you hold him ? ” asked Bill.

“I’m not as strong as I used to be, ” said old Dorset, “but I think I can promise you ten minutes. ”

“Enough, ” said Bill. “In ten minutes I can reach the Canadian border. ”

And, as dark as it was and as fat as Bill was, and as good a runner as I am, he was a good mile and half out of Summit before I could catch up with him.

(*Simplified from O. Henry*)

Comprehension Questions :

1. Why did Bill and Sam select Summit for their kidnapping plan ?
2. Describe briefly how the two men spent the night with the boy.
3. How did the boy trouble Bill when Sam had gone to the mountain ?
4. What proposal did the two men make in their letter to Ebenezer Dorset ?
5. How did Bill send the boy home ? Did the boy really go away ?
6. What was the counter-proposal made by Ebenezer Dorset ?
7. Why did the two men decide to return the boy and pay money to his father ?
8. Write briefly how the boy would have behaved with his neighbours.

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5. POOH GOES VISITING

Edward Bear, known to his friends as Winnie-the-Pooh, or Pooh for short, was walking through the forest one day, humming[1] proudly to himself.

“ Aha ! ” said he. “ If I know anything about anything, that hole means Rabbit, ” he said, “ and Rabbit means Company, ” he said, “ and Company means Food. ”

So he bent down, put his head into the hole, and called out :

“ Is anybody at home ? ”

There was a sudden scuffling[2] noise from inside the hole, and then silence.

What I said was, “ Is anybody at home ? ” called out Pooh very loudly.

“ No ! ” said a voice ; and then added, “ You needn't shout so loud. I heard you quite well the first time. ”

“ Bother ! ” said Pooh. “ Isn't there anybody here at all ? ”

“ Nobody. ”

Winnie - the - Pooh took his head out of the hole, and thought for a little, and he thought to himself ; “ There

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1. hum : sing with the lips closed
2. scuffling: confused

must be somebody there, because somebody must have *said* 'Nobody.'" So he put his head back in the hole and said :

"Hallo, Rabbit, isn't that you ?"

"No," said Rabbit, in a different sort of voice this time.

"But isn't that Rabbit's voice ?"

"I don't *think* so," said Rabbit. "It isn't *meant* to be."

"Oh !" said Pooh.

He took his head out of the hole, and thought again and then he put it back, and said :

"Well, could you very kindly tell me where Rabbit is ?"

"He has gone to see his friend Pooh Bear, who is a great friend of his."

"But this is Me —" said Bear, very much surprised.

"What sort of Me ?"

"Pooh Bear."

"Are you sure ?" said Rabbit, still more surprised.

"Quite, quite sure," said Pooh.

"Oh, well, then, come in."

So Pooh pushed and pushed and pushed his way through the hole, and at last he got in.

"You were quite right," said Rabbit, looking at him all over. "It is you. Glad to see you."

"Who did you think it was?"

"Well, I wasn't sure. You know how it is in the Forest. One can't have *anybody* coming into one's house. One has to be *careful*. What about a mouthful of something?"

Pooh always liked a little something at eleven o'clock in the morning, and he was very glad to see Rabbit getting out the plates and mugs. When Rabbit said, "Honey or condensed milk with your bread?" he was so excited that he said, "Both," and then, so as not to seem greedy, he added, "But don't bother about the bread, please." And for a long time after that he said nothing... until at last he got up, shook Rabbit lovingly by the paw, and said that he must be going on.

"Must you?" said Rabbit politely.

"Well," said Pooh, "I could stay a little longer if it—if you—" and he tried very hard not to look in the direction of the larder[3].

"As a matter of fact," said Rabbit, "I was going out myself directly."

"Oh well, then, I'll be going on. Good-bye."

"Well, good-bye, if you're sure you won't have any more."

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[3] larder : store room for food

"Is there any more ?" asked Pooh quickly.

Rabbit took the covers off the dishes, and said, "No, there isn't."

"I thought not," said Pooh, nodding to himself. "Well good-bye. I must be going on."

So he started to climb out of the hole. He pulled with his front paws[4], and pushed with his back paws, and in a little while his nose was out in the open again... and then his ears...and then his front paws...and then his shoulders... and then —

"Oh, help !" said Pooh. "I'd better go back."

"Oh, bother !" said Pooh. "I shall have to go on."

"I can't do either !" said Pooh. "Oh, help *and* bother !"

Now, by this time Rabbit wanted to go for a walk too, and finding the front door full, he went out by the back door, and came round to Pooh, and looked at him.

"Hallo, are you stuck ?" he asked.

"N-no," said Pooh carelessly. "Just resting and thinking and humming to myself."

"Here, give us a paw."

Poor Bear stretched out a paw, and Rabbit pulled and pulled and pulled....

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[4] paws : soft feet of an animal

"Ow!" cried Pooh. "You're hurting!"

"The fact is," said Rabbit, "You're stuck."

"It all comes," said Pooh crossly, "of not having front doors big enough."

"It all comes," said Rabbit sternly, "of eating too much. I thought at the time that one of us was eating too much, and I knew it wasn't *me*. Well, well, I shall go and fetch Christopher Robin."

Christopher Robin lived at the other end of the Forest, and when he came back with Rabbit, and saw the front half of Pooh, he said, "Silly old Bear," in such a loving voice that everybody felt quite hopeful again.

"I was just beginning to think," said Bear, "that Rabbit might never be able to use his front door again. And I should *hate* that," he said.

"So should I," said Rabbit.

"Use his front door again?" said Christopher Robin. "Of course he'll use his front door again."

"Good," said Rabbit.

"If we can't pull you out, Pooh, we might push you back."

Rabbit scratched his whiskers[5] thoughtfully, and pointed out that, when once Pooh was pushed back, he was back, and of course nobody was more glad to see Pooh than *he* was, still there it was, some lived in trees and some lived underground, and...

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[5] whiskers : hair standing out from the face of an animal

"You mean I'd *never* get out ?" said Pooh.

"I mean," said Rabbit, "that having got so far, it seems a pity to waste it."

Christopher Robin nodded.

"Then there's only one thing to be done," he said. "We shall have to wait for you to get thin again."

"How long does getting thin take ?" asked Pooh anxiously.

"About a week, I should think."

"But I can't stay here for a *week* !"

"You can *stay* here all right, silly old Bear. It's getting you out which is so difficult."

"We'll read to you," said Rabbit cheerfully.

"And I hope it won't snow," he added. "And I say, old fellow you're taking up a good deal of room in my house — do you mind if I use your back legs as a towel-horse[6] ? Because, I mean, there they are — doing nothing — and it would be very convenient just to hang the towels on them."

"A week !" said Pooh gloomily. "*What about meals* ?"

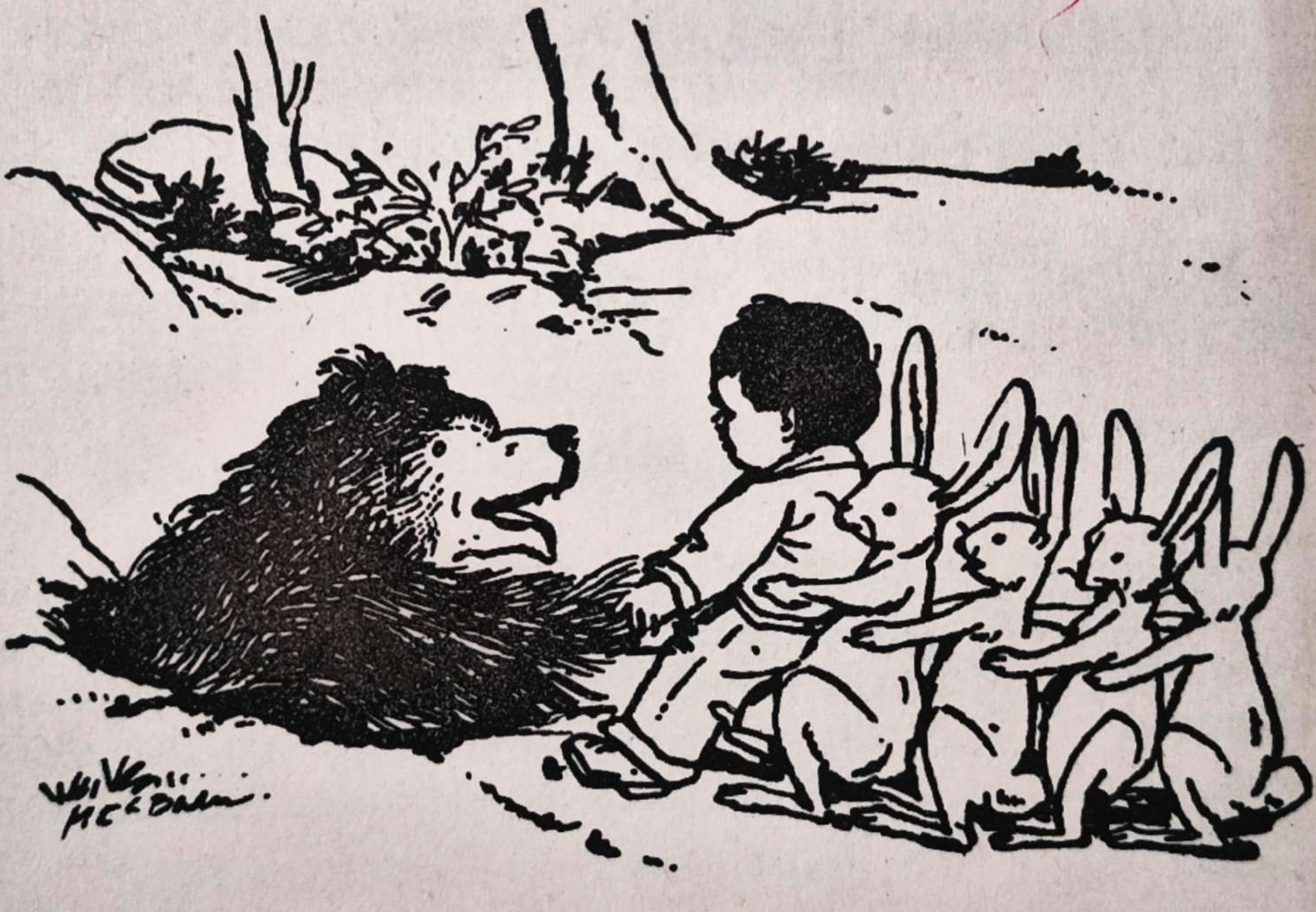
---

[6] towel-horse : wooden frame for hanging towels

'I'm afraid no meals," said Christopher Robin, "because of getting thin quicker. But we *will* read to you."

Bear began to sigh, and then found he couldn't because he was so tightly stuck ; and a tear rolled down his eye.

So for a week Christopher Robin read at the North end of Pooh, and Rabbit hung his washing on the South end... and in between Bear felt himself getting slenderer and slenderer. And at the end of the week Christopher Robin said, "*Now* !"



So he took hold of Pooh's front paws and Rabbit took hold of Christopher Robin, and all Rabbit's friends and relations took hold of Rabbit, and they all pulled together....

And for a long time Pooh only said, " Ow ! "....

And " Oh ! "

And then, all of a sudden, he said " Pop ! " just as if a cork were coming out of a bottle.

And Christopher Robin and Rabbit and all Rabbit's friends and relations went head-over-heels backwards... and on the top of them came Winnier-the-Pooh — free !

—*A. A. Milne*

Comprehension Questions :

1. Describe briefly how Pooh managed to get into Rabbit's hole ?
2. What happened to Pooh when he tried to get out of Rabbit's hole ?
3. How did Christopher Robin propose to get Pooh free ?
4. How did Rabbit make use of Pooh's back legs ?
5. How did Christopher Robin finally save the bear ?
6. What idea of Pooh's character do you get from the story ?

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6. THE IMP AND THE BREAD

A poor peasant set out early one morning to plough[1], taking with him for his breakfast some bread. He wrapped the bread in his coat, put it under a bush, and set to work. After a while, when his horse was tired and he was hungry, the peasant let the horse loose to graze, and went to get his coat and his breakfast.

He lifted the coat, but the bread was gone! He looked and looked, turned the coat over, shook it out — but the bread was gone. The peasant could not understand this at all.

'That's strange,' thought he; 'I saw no one, but still some one has been here and has taken the bread!'

It was an imp[2] who had stolen the bread while the peasant was ploughing, and at that moment he was sitting behind the bush, waiting to hear the peasant swear and call on the Devil.

The peasant was sorry to lose his breakfast. 'It can't be helped,' said he. 'After all, I shan't die of hunger! No doubt whoever took the bread needed it. May it do him good!'

And he went to the well, had a drink of water and rested a bit. Then he began ploughing again.

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[1] plough : turn up the soil before planting seeds

[2] imp : little devil

The imp was disappointed at not having made the peasant sin, and he went to report what had happened to the Devil, his master.

He came to the Devil and toldhimhow he had taken the peasant's bread, and how the peasant, instead of cursing, had said, 'May it do him good !'

The Devil was angry, and replied : 'If the man got the better of you, it was your own fault — you don't understand your business ! If the peasants, and their wives after them, take to that sort of thing, it will be the end of us. The matter can't be left like that ! Go back at once and put things right. If in three years you don't defeat the peasant, I'll have you ducked in holy water[3] !'

The imp was frightened. He went back to earth, thinking how he could redeem[4] his fault. He thought and thought, and at last hit upon a good plan.

He turned himself into a labourer and went and took service with the poor peasant. The first year he advised the peasant to sow corn in a marshy place. The peasant took his advice and sowed in the marsh[5]. The year turned out a very dry one, and the crops of the other peasants were all damaged by the sun, but the poor peasant's corn grew thick and tall. He had much more grain than he needed for a whole year.

The next year the imp advised the peasant to sow on the hill; and it turned out to be a wet summer. Other people's corn was beaten down and damaged, but the peasant's crop, up on the hill, was a fine one. He had more grain left over than before, so that he did not know what to do with it all.

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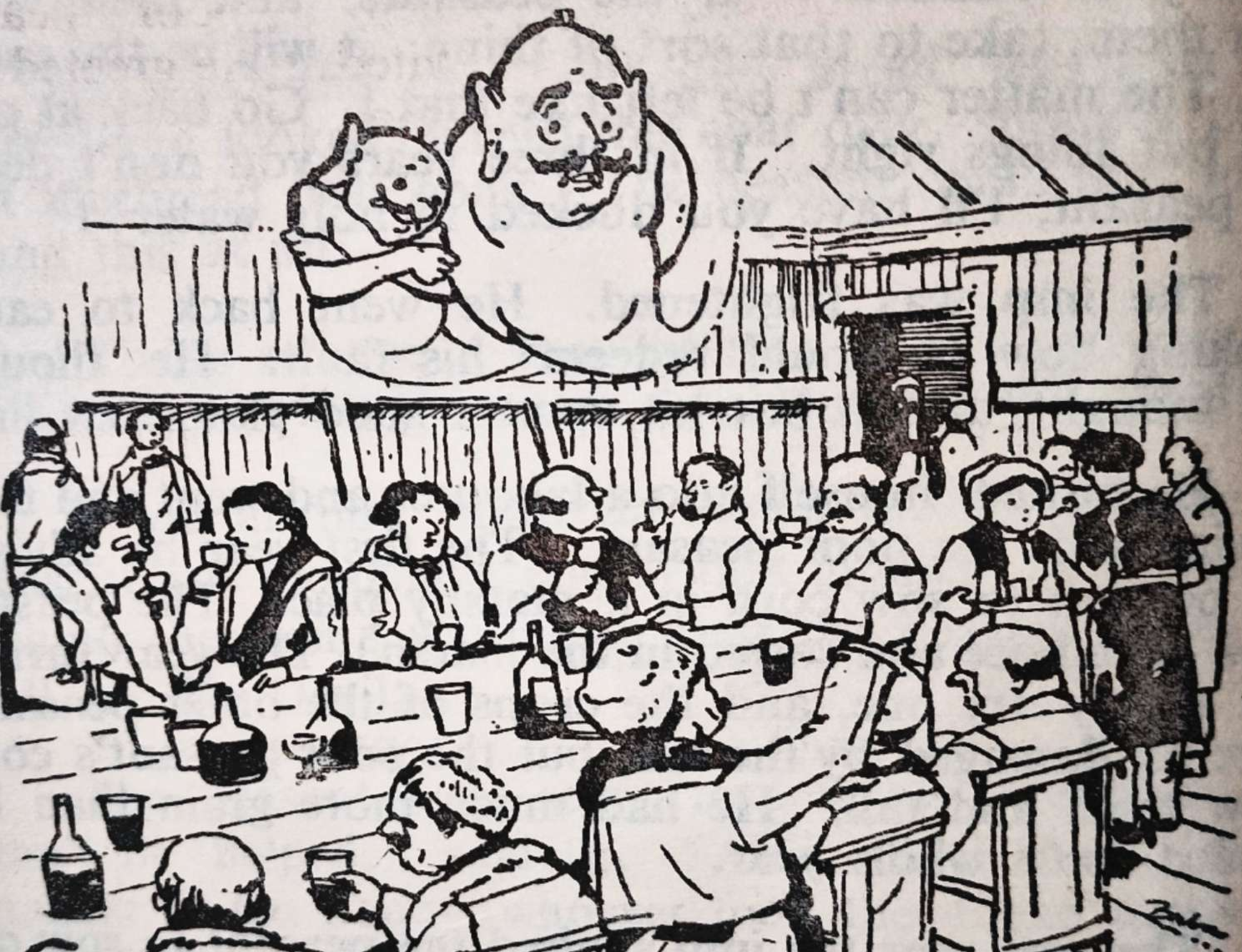
3. holy water : water blessed by a priest
4. redeem : make amends for
5. marsh : low-lying wet land

Then the imp showed the peasant how he could crush the grain and make spirit from it. The peasant made strong drink, and began to drink it himself and to give it to his friends.

So the imp went to the Devil, his master, and boasted that he had made up for his failure. The Devil said that he would come and see for himself.



He came to the peasant's house, and saw that the peasant had invited his well-to-do neighbours and was treating them to drink. His wife was offering the drink to the guests, and as she handed it round she fell against the table and spilt a glassful.

The peasant was angry, and scolded his wife : 'what do you mean, you slut ? Do you think it's ditchwater, you cripple, that you must go pouring good stuff like that over the floor ?'

'See,' said the imp, 'that's the man who did not mind the loss of his only piece of bread.'

The peasant, still shouting at his wife, began to carry the drink round himself. Just then a poor peasant returning from work came in uninvited. He greeted the company, sat down and saw that they were drinking. Tired with his day's work, he felt that he too would like a drop. He sat and sat, and his mouth kept watering, but the host said, 'I can't find drink for every one who comes along.'

This pleased the Devil ; but the imp laughed and said, 'Wait a bit, there's more to come yet !'

The rich peasants drank, and their host drank too. And they began to make false speeches to one another.

The Devil listened and listened, and praised the imp.

'If,' said he, 'the drink makes them so foxy that they begin to cheat each other, they will soon all be in our hands.'

'Wait for what's coming,' said the imp. 'Let them have another glass all round. Now they are like foxes, wagging their tails and trying to get round one another, but presently you will see them like savage wolves.'

The peasants had another glass each, and their talk became wilder and rougher. Instead of smooth speeches, they began to abuse one another. Soon they took to fighting and punched one another's noses. And the host joined in the fight and he too got well beaten.

The Devil looked on and was much pleased at all this.

‘This is first-rate !’ said he.

But the imp replied : ‘Wait a bit — the best is yet to come. Wait till they have had a third glass. Now they are raging like wolves, but let them have one more glass and they will be like swine.’

The peasants had their third glass and became quite like brutes.[6] They shouted, not knowing why, and not listening to one another.

Then the party began to break up. Some went alone, some in twos, and some in threes, all staggering[7] down the street. The host went out to speed his guests, but he fell on his nose into a puddle, smeared himself from top to toe, and lay there grunting[8] like a pig.

This pleased the Devil still more.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘you have hit on a first-rate drink, and have quite made up for your blunder about the bread. But now tell me how this drink is made. You must first have put in fox's blood : that was what made the peasants sly as foxes. Then, I suppose, you added wolf's blood : that is what made them fierce like wolves. And you must have finished off with swine's blood, to make them behave like swine.’

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[6] brute : (here) cruel man

[7] stagger : walk unsteadily

[8] grunt : make a noise like that of a pig

'No,' said the imp, 'that was not the way I did it. All I did was to see that the peasant had more corn than he needed. The blood of the beasts is always in man; but as long as he has only enough corn for his needs, it is kept in bounds. While that was the case, the peasant did not grudge the loss of his last piece of bread. But when he had corn left over, he looked for ways of getting pleasure out of it. And I showed him a pleasure — drinking ! And when he began to turn God's good gifts into spirits for his own pleasure — the fox's, wolf's, and swine's blood in him all came out. If only he goes on drinking, he will always be a beast !'

The Devil praised the imp, forgave him for his former blunder, and advanced him to a post of high honour.

— *Leo Tolstoy*

Comprehension Questions :

1. How did the peasant behave when his only piece of bread was gone ?
2. Why was the imp disappointed ?
3. What advice did the imp give the peasant ? Why did he do that ?
4. What did the imp teach the peasant when he had plenty of corn ?
5. How did the peasant change after he started drinking ? Give an example of his changed behaviour.
6. Why was the Devil pleased with the imp's work ?
7. How did the imp bring about the change in the peasant ?
8. If you were the peasant, what would you have done when you had plenty of corn ?

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7. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU — THE LATHI CHARGE

The Simon Commission[1] was due in Lucknow, and the local Congress Committee made preparations for its 'reception'. Huge processions, meetings, and demonstrations[2] were organised many days in advance. I went to Lucknow, and was present at some of these. The success of these demonstrations, which were perfectly orderly and peaceful, provoked[3] the authorities. They began to obstruct and issue orders against the taking out of processions in certain areas. It was in this connection that I had a new experience, and my body felt the lathi blows of the police.

Processions had been prohibited. We decided to give no cause for complaint on this score, and arranged for small groups of sixteen, as far as I can remember, to go separately, along certain routes to the meeting place. Technically, this was no doubt a breach of the order, for sixteen with a flag were a procession. I led one of the groups of sixteen and, after a big gap, came another such group under the leadership of my colleague, Govind Ballabh Pant[4]. My group had gone perhaps about two hundred metres, the road was a deserted one, when we heard the clatter[5] of horses' hoofs behind us. We looked back to find a bunch of mounted police, probably two or three dozen in number, coming towards us at a high speed. They were soon right upon us, and the impact of the horses broke up our little column of sixteen. The mounted policemen then started beating our volunteers with huge batons. The volunteers sought refuge on the sidewalks, and some even entered the petty shops. They were followed and beaten down. I tried to seek safety when I saw the horses charging[6] down upon us. But

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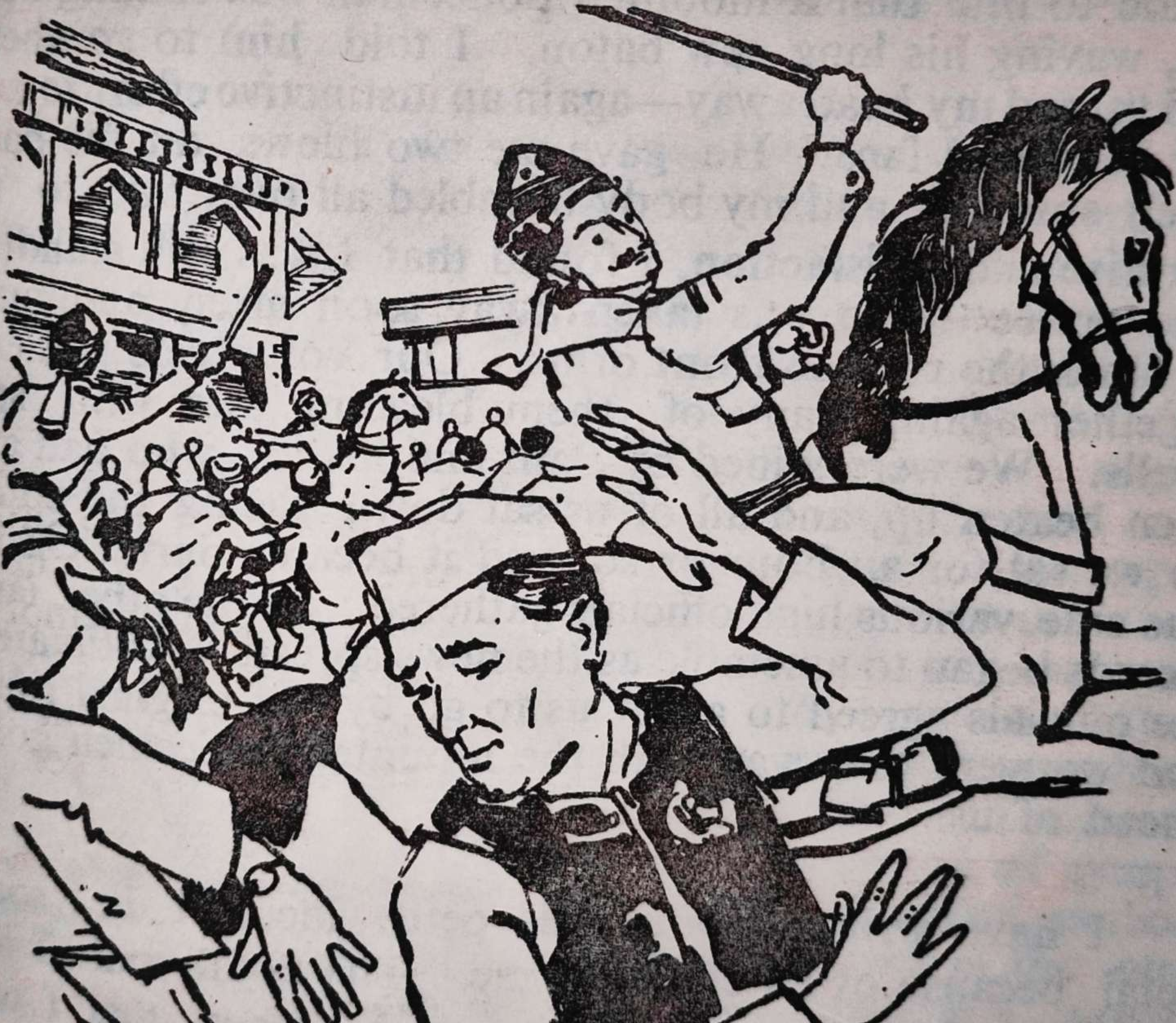
[1] **Simon Commission :** John Alsebrook Simon was appointed by the British Government during 1927-30 to study the constitutional future of India. Indian National Congress organised protests against the Commission's visit to India.

[2] **demonstration :** show of public feeling

[3] **provoke :** make angry

[4] **Govind Ballabh Pant :** famous freedom fighter, later Chief Minister of U.P. and Union Home Minister.



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[5] clatter : noise of fallin things

[6] charge : rush in order to attack

then, I suppose, some other instinct held me to my place and I survived the first charge, which had been checked by the volunteers behind me. Suddenly I found myself alone in the middle of the road. A few yards from me, in various directions, were the policemen beating down our volunteers. Automatically, I began moving slowly to the side of the road to be less conspicuous[7] but again I stopped and had a little argument with myself, and decided that it would be improper for me to move away. All this was a matter of a few seconds only, but I have the clearest recollections of that argument with me. I looked round to find that a mounted policeman was coming up to me, waving his long new baton. I told him to go ahead, and turned my head away—again an instinctive effort to save the head and face. He gave me two blows on the back. I felt stunned, and my body trembled all over but, to my surprise and satisfaction, I found that I was still standing. The police force was taken away soon after, and made to block the road in front of us. Our volunteers gathered together again, many of them bleeding and with split skulls. We were joined by Pant and his lot, who had also been beaten up, and all of us sat down facing the police. So we sat for an hour or so, and it became dark. On the one side, various high officials gathered ; on the other, large crowds began to assemble as the news spread. Ultimately, the officials agreed to allow us to go by our original route, and we went that way with the mounted policemen going ahead of us.

I have written about this petty incident in some detail because of its effect on me. The bodily pain I felt was quite forgotten in a feeling of happiness that I was physically strong enough to face and bear lathi blows.

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[7] conspicuous : very noticeable

My father was at Allahabad at the time, and I was afraid that the news of the attack on me, when he read about it in the next morning's papers, would upset him and the rest of the family. So I telephoned to him late in the evening to assure him that all was well, and that he should not worry. But he did worry and, finding it difficult to sleep over it, he decided at about midnight to come over to Lucknow. The last train had gone, and so he started by -car. He had some bad luck on the way, and it was nearly five in the morning by the time he had covered the journey of 146 miles and reached Lucknow, tired out and exhausted.

That was about the time when we were getting ready to go in a procession to the station. The previous evening's incidents had roused up Lucknow. Even before the sun was out, vast numbers of people made their way to the station. Innumerable little processions came from various parts of the city, and from the Congress office started the main procession, consisting of several thousands, marching in fours. We were in this main procession. We were stopped by the police as we approached the station. There was a huge open space, about half a kilometre square, in front of the station and we were made to line up on one side of this maidan. There our procession remained, making no attempt to push our way forward. The place was full of foot and mounted police, as well as the military. The crowd of sympathetic onlookers increased and many of these persons managed to spread out in twos and threes in the open space. Suddenly we saw in the far distance a moving mass. They were two or three long lines of cavalry[8] or mounted police, covering the entire area, coming towards us, and beating up the people in the maidan.

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[8] cavalry : soldiers on horses

Many harmless and surprised sightseers went under the horses' hoofs. Behind the charging lines these people lay on the ground, some still unable to move, others writhing[9] in pain, and the whole appearance of that maidan was that of a battlefield. But we did not have much time for looking at that scene ; the horsemen were soon upon us, and their front line clashed with the processionists. We held our ground, and as we appeared to be unyielding, the horses had to pull up at the last moment and stood on their hind legs with their front hoofs moving in the air over our heads. And then began a beating of us, and battering[10] with lathis and long batons both by the mounted and the foot police. It was a severe beating. I knew that I had to stay where I was, and must not yield or go back. I felt half blinded with the blows, and sometimes I felt anger and a desire to hit out. I thought how easy it would be to pull down the police officer in front of me from his horse and to mount up myself, but long training and discipline held and I did not raise a hand, except to protect my face from a blow. Besides, I knew well enough that any attack by us would result in a tragedy, the firing and shooting down of large numbers of our men.

After what seemed a very long time, but was probably only a few minutes, our line began to yield slowly, step by step, without breaking up. This left me somewhat isolated,[11] and more exposed at the sides. More blows came, and then I was suddenly lifted off my feet from behind and carried off, to my great annoyance[1]. Some of my young colleagues, worried about my safety, had decided to protect me in this way.

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9. writhing : turning the body from side to side
10. battering : hitting very hard and often
11. isolated : separated from others
12. annoyance : feeling of anger

Our men lined up again about a hundred feet behind our original line. The police also withdrew and stood in a line, fifty feet away from us. So we remained, when the cause of all this trouble, the Simon Commission, secretly went away from the station in the far distance, more than half a kilometre away. But, even so, they did not escape the black flags or demonstrators. Soon after, we came back in full procession to the Congress office, and there dispersed, and I went on to father, who was anxiously waiting for us.

Now that the excitement of the moment had passed, I felt pains all over my body and great tiredness. Almost every part of me seemed to ache, and I was covered with wounds and marks of blows. But fortunately I was not injured in any vital spot. Many of our companions were less fortunate and were badly injured.

(*Slightly simplified from Jawaharlal Nehru's Autobiography*)

Comprehension Questions :

1. Why did Nehru and others take out processions in Lucknow ?
2. Describe briefly how Nehru experienced lathi blows for the first time.
3. What did Nehru's father do when he heard about the attack on his son ?
4. How were the processionists attacked on the second day ?
5. How was Nehru protected by his young colleagues ? Did he like it ?
6. How did Nehru feel after experiencing the lathi blows ?
7. Briefly describe the protest demonstration on the morning of the arrival of the Simon Commission in Lucknow.

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8. THE NIGHT THE BED FELL

I suppose that the high-water mark[1] of my youth in Columbus, Ohio, was the night the bed fell on my father. It is an incredible tale, but it did take place.

It happened that my father had decided to sleep in the attic[2] one night, to be away where he could think. My mother opposed the idea strongly because, she said the old wooden bed up there was unsafe. It was shaky and the heavy headboard would crash down on father's head in case the bed fell, and kill him. But father did not agree, and at a quarter past ten he closed the attic door behind him and went up the narrow twisting stairs. We later heard noises as he crawled into bed.

We had visiting us at this time a nervous first cousin of mine named Briggs Beall, who believed that he was likely to cease breathing when he was asleep. It was his feeling that if he were not awakened every hour during the night, he might die of breathlessness. He had been used to setting an alarm clock to ring at intervals until morning, but I persuaded him to stop this. He slept in my room and I told him that I was such a light sleeper that if anybody stopped breathing in the same room with me, I would wake instantly. He tested me the first night— which I had suspected he would — by holding his breath after my regular breathing had convinced him I was asleep. I was not asleep, however, and called to him. This seemed to satisfy him, but he took the precaution of putting a glass of spirits of camphor on a little table at the head of his bed. In case I didn't wake him up until he was almost gone, he said he would sniff[3] the camphor.

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[1] high-water mark : highest point of achievement

[2] attic : room just under the roof

Briggs was not the only member of his family who had such fears. Old Aunt Melissa Beall (who could whistle like a man, with two fingers in her mouth) suffered from the thought that she was going to die on South High Street, because she had been born on South High Street and married on South High Street. Then there was Aunt Sarah Shoaf, who never went to bed at night without the fear that a burglar was going to get in and blow chloroform under her door through a tube. To avert this danger — for she was in greater fear of anaesthetics[4] than of losing her household goods — she always put her money, silverware, and other valuables just outside her bedroom, with a note reading : "This is all I have. Please take it and do not use your chloroform, as this is all I have." Aunt Gracie Shoaf was also afraid of burglars. She was confident that burglars had been getting into her house every night for forty years. The fact that she never missed anything was to her no proof to the contrary. She always claimed that she scared them off before they could take anything by throwing shoes down the hallway. When she went to bed she piled, where she could get at them handily, all the shoes in her house. Five minutes after she had turned off the light she would sit up in bed and say "Hark!" Her husband, who had learned to ignore the whole situation as long ago as 1903, would either be sound asleep or pretend to be sound asleep. In either case he would not respond to her tugging and pulling. Then she would get up, tiptoe to the door, open it slightly and throw a shoe down the hall in one direction, and its mate down the hall in the other direction. Some nights she threw them all, some nights only a few.

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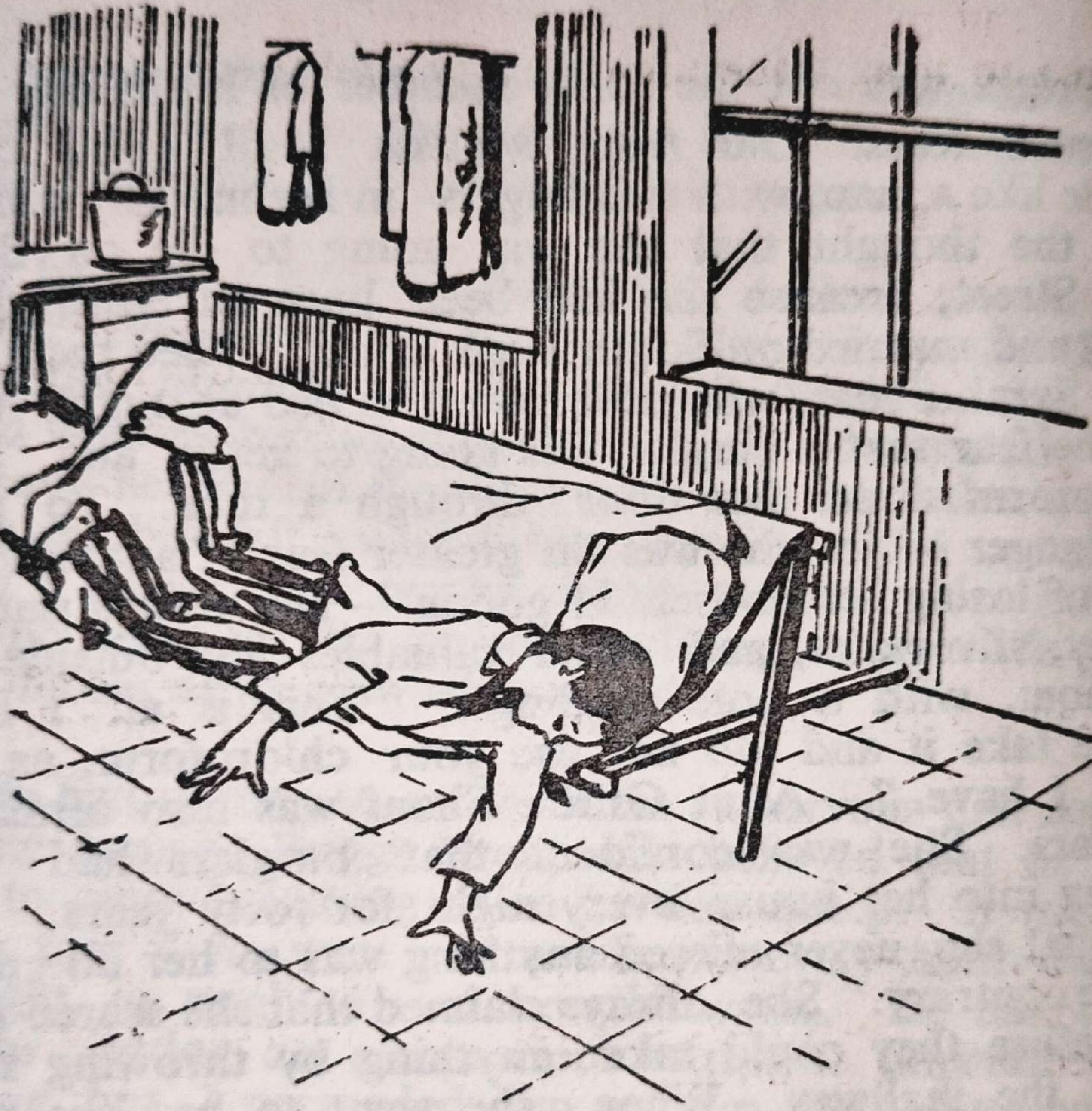
[3] sniff : draw air noisily up the nose

[4] anaesthetic : substance which causes loss of senses



By midnight we were all in bed. In the front room upstairs (just under father's attic bedroom) were my mother and my brother Herman who sometimes sang in his sleep. Briggs Beall and myself were in a room next to this one. My brother Roy was in a room across the hall from ours. Our dog, Rex, slept in the hall.

My bed was an army cot, one of those which are made wide enough to sleep on comfortably only by putting up, flat with the middle sections, the two sides which ordinarily hang down. When these sides are up, it is dangerous to roll too far towards the edge, for then the cot is likely to tip completely over, bringing the whole bed down on top of one, with a crash. This, in fact, is exactly what happened, about two o'clock in the morning. (It was my mother who, in recalling the scene later, first referred to it as " the night the bed fell on your father. ")

Always a deep sleeper, slow to wake up (I had lied to Briggs), I was at first unconscious of what had happened when I fell on the floor and the cot fell over on me. It left me still warmly bundled up and unhurt, for the bed rested above me like a canopy.[5] Hence I did not wake up. The noise, however, instantly awakened my mother, in the next room, who thought that the big wooden bed upstairs had fallen on father. She therefore screamed, "Let's go to your poor father ! " It was this shout, rather than the noise of my cot falling that awakened Herman, in the same room with her. He thought that mother had become hysterical.[6] " You're all right, Mamma ! " he shouted, trying to calm her. They exchanged shout for shout for perhaps ten seconds : " Let's go to your poor father ! " and " You're all right ! " That woke up Briggs. By this time I was conscious of what was going on, in a way, but did not realize that I was under my bed instead of on it. Briggs, awakening in the midst of loud shouts, came to the quick conclusion that he was dying on account of breathing difficulty and that we were all trying to " bring him out. " With a low moan, he grasped the glass of camphor at the head of his bed and instead of sniffing it poured it over himself. The room smelt of camphor. " Ugf agfg, " Briggs struggled for breath like a drowning man, for he had almost succeeded in stopping his breath under the strong smell. He leaped out of bed and moved towards the open window with out-stretched hands, but he came up against one that was closed. With his hand, he beat out the glass, and I could hear it crash. It was at this time that I, in trying to get up, felt my bed above me! Still half sleepy, I now suspected, in my turn, that the whole noise and confusion were to save me from under the bed. "Get me out of this!" I cried. "Get me out!" I think I had the frightening feeling that I was buried in a mine.

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[5] canopy : curtain hung above a bed

[6] hysterical : suffering from uncontrolled emotions

By this time my mother, still shouting, followed by Herman, still shouting, was trying to open the door to the attic, in order to go up and get my father's body out of the wreckage. The door was stuck, however, and wouldn't open. Her violent pulls on it only added to the general noise and confusion. Roy and the dog were now up, the one shouting questions, the other barking.

Father, farthest away and soundest sleeper of all, had by this time been awakened by the hitting on the attic door. He decided that the house was on fire. "I'm coming, I'm coming!" he said in a slow, sleepy voice. It took him many minutes to regain full consciousness. My mother, still believing he was caught under the bed, detected in his "I'm coming!" the sad note of one who is about to die. "He's dying!" she shouted.

"I'm all right!" Briggs shouted to reassure her. "I'm all right!" He still believed that it was his own closeness to death that was worrying mother. I found at last the light switch in my room, unlocked the door, and Briggs and I joined the others at the attic door. The dog, who never liked Briggs, jumped for him—assuming that he was responsible for whatever was going on — and Roy had to throw Rex and hold him. We could hear father crawling out of bed upstairs. Roy pulled the attic door open, with a mighty jerk[7], and father came down the stairs, sleepy and irritable[8] but safe and sound. My mother began to weep when she saw him. Rex began to howl, " What in the name of heaven is going on here ? " asked father.

The situation was finally put together. Father caught a cold from moving around in his bare feet but there were no other bad results. " I'm glad, " said mother, who always looked on the bright side of things, " that your grandfather wasn't here. "

(*Simplified from James Thurber*)

Comprehension Questions:

1. What did Briggs Beall believe would happen to him during sleep ? What did the author tell him?
2. What was Aunt Sarah Shoaf afraid of ? What precaution did she take?
3. How did Aunt Gracie Shoaf fight the burglars ?
4. What happened to the author in the night ? What did his mother think was happening ?
5. What did Briggs Beall do when he woke up ?
6. What did father think was happening ?
7. Do you think the night's events were terrible or funny ? why do you think so ?
8. Imagine you were Herman. Try to describe the night's events briefly.

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[7] jerk: sudden movement

[8] irritable: easily made angry

9. CLIMB HIGH

Was it really necessary for his father to sell their pony, thought young Jon Vekelof. He was sitting near the warm fire while his father smoked his pipe at the other end of the long room. It was a pleasant room, but tonight it seemed dull as he thought about the pony. That pony was their link with the world outdoors, the world of free motion and high flying birds and wide skies. Often gray and harsh, it was still Iceland[1], his homeland. But if the pony, his companion, were gone ... Hark! What was that sound outside ?

Jon jumped up and ran through the outer passage to the door. Directly in front of his eyes was a sight that made him blink and look again. A strange thing was resting on the ground a stone's throw away, a thing of metal and wood with wings on either side of it and a blunt nose in front. Standing beside it were two men dressed like strangers. One of them began to speak. He was a tall man with dark, keen eyes. His companion, a little, thin man who knew the Icelandic language, interpreted. Jon quickly grasped their meaning. Their plane had had to land on account of the fog. They wished to spend the night at the farmhouse.

Jon had once seen a picture of an airplane in his school-book. Oh, if he might only see it rise and dip in the air ! Meanwhile his father came to the door.

" Sleep here and be welcome, " was his reply to their questions. Jon ran to build up the fire with more logs.

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[1] **Iceland :** country north of Atlantic Ocean—famous for its ice-covered plateaus.

In front of it he set two armchairs and then went to the loft to put more sheepskins[2] on his bed. He would sleep by the fire tonight. When the strangers came in, there were mugs of hot tea ready for them, and bread and sausage[3]. The boy wished, while they were eating, that he might go out and touch the plane.

The taller of the Americans—they were Americans—soon started speaking through his friend.

"I am here to collect rare birds' eggs," he said, "and must find the nest of a golden eagle. Tell me, boy, is there one to be found near here?"

"Yes, " he said, "yes. "

"Will you take us to it ? We could go tomorrow in the plane, " said the smaller man.

What a proposal ! Jon's face grew red with delight but he answered honestly. "I'm afraid, sir, the strange machine flying in the air would frighten the eagles. Then they would fly up in anger and perhaps trample on their eggs. It's best for me to go by myself and climb the rocks quietly. I'll go on Ingeborg, " he added doubtfully, looking at his father and wondering how soon the pony might be sold.

But his father lifted his head. "My son will go," said old Jon, indicating that they might make the farmhouse their headquarters during the search.

"Good enough," said the tall man. "But how will you get up those tall cliffs[4]?"

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[2] **sheepskin :** a mat made of sheep's skin with wool on it
[3] **sausage :** meat cut small and put into a tube-like skin
[4] **cliff :** steep face of rock

"Watch and see," laughed Jon. Many times he had wanted to bring down the eagles' eggs, but had always feared the fierce birds with their powerful wings and beaks. Even the cry they gave was terrifying.

"We will pay well for these eggs. My collection will be incomplete without them."

These words settled the bargain. If he could earn enough to pay their debts, then Ingeborg, the pony, might stay! Bad weather held up his trip for two days. On the second afternoon Jon went on foot to their nearest neighbour half a mile away to get some oats for the pony. She must be fed well or she would not be able to make the hard trip. The cliff where the eagle nested was miles away. And early spring was not a good time to go. Snow might fall.

On the morning he started, Ingeborg seemed to know that they must make double-quick time. Food and a flask of coffee were fastened to the saddle.

He had started while it was yet twilight[5], for, in the land of the midnight sun, there are few hours of daylight except in mid-summer. While these hours lasted he must travel quickly. Jon stroked his pet's ears and urged her on, "Ingeborg, hurry!"

On and on they went until he almost slept in the saddle and one hour of the precious daylight was gone. But, at last, he was rewarded by sight of the cliffs.

Then Jon saw one of the golden eagles, soon followed by another. No doubt the birds had scented a dead sheep in some far away land and were going after it. Now, indeed, was his chance.

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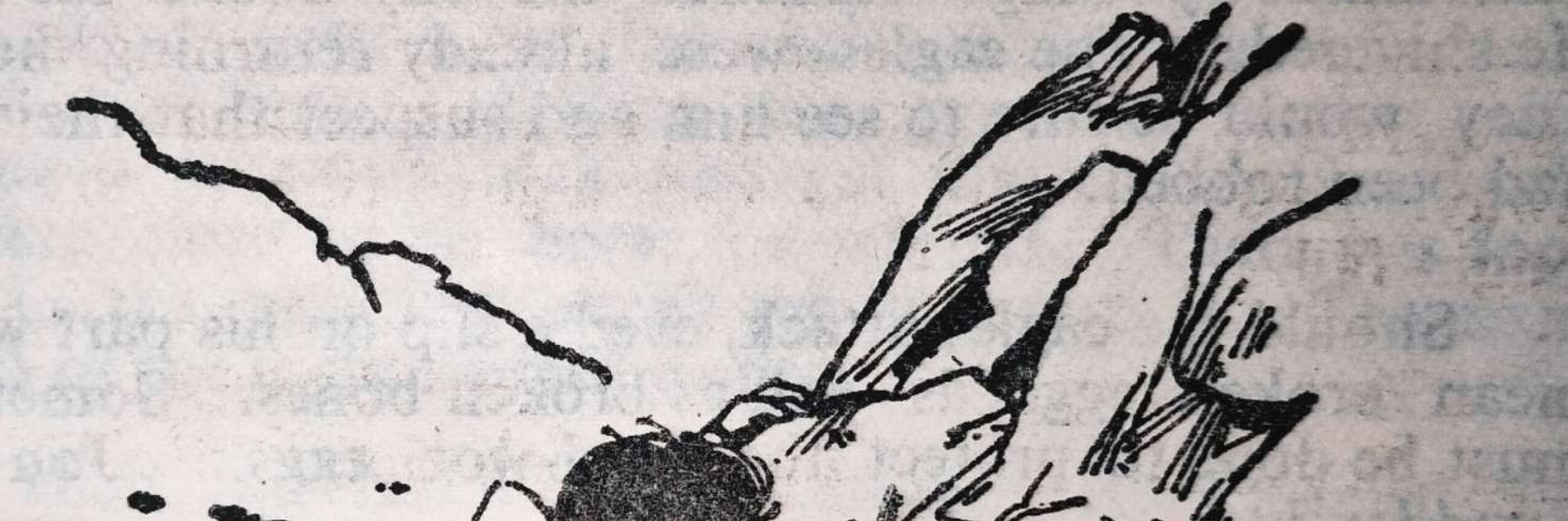
[5] twilight : half-light just before sunrise or after sunset

He led the pony to the foot of the highest cliff, marking carefully the direction from which the eagles had started. Jon strapped[6] his back the basket for the eggs and put on his feet his rough climbing sandals[7].

Cautiously and skilfully he began to climb. Up and up, around a narrow point of rock, up and around another he went.



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[6] strap : fasten in place with a narrow band

[7] climbing sandals : sandals with spikes for climbing ice-slopes

At last he reached the final ledge[8]. Looking into a gap between the rocks, he saw a loose nest of sticks. Lying in it were four eggs, white with red spots. They were still warm. Jon stretched out a hand and, one by one, drew those eggs, from the nest. He wrapped each one securely in the thick bits of felt and cloth he had brought, and put them carefully in the basket.

He started down. Several times he almost lost his footing and was only saved by bits of shrubbery[9]. The wet snow made the rocks more slippery and the deeps below them, terrifying. Jon was almost down the cliff when shadowy wings darkened the sky above his head. He shivered. The eagles were already returning home! They would be sure to see him and suspect that their nest had been robbed.

Should the eagles attack, even a slip on his part would mean broken eggs as well as broken bones. Something must be done to protect the hard-won eggs. Jon had a sudden idea.

Reaching around with his left hand he took off the basket from his back. Searching for some grass, he threw the basket down, down and out into the air. He was barely in time, too, for in another instant the larger of the angry eagles came down on him. Sharp claws tore at his shoulders. To save his eyes, Jon shut them in desperation, and went falling down the cliff after the basket.

When at last he opened my eyes, he thought they were the only part of him that would ever move. He received severe wounds. He was lying at the cliff's foot and close beside him stood Ingeborg. The pony, worried and distressed, had broken her rope and was licking his face. Jon stroked the pony's nose and a dreadful surging pain shot through his left arm and shoulder. Turning his head slightly he saw his basket lying not far away, covered with snow. He turned over and realized now that his left arm was broken. He crawled over to the basket a few inches at a time. He opened the cover, trembling to think what he might find. By some miraculous luck only one egg was broken. The other three had been protected by the wrappings.

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[8] ledge : narrow flat place in a cliff

[9] shrubbery ; low bushes

What should he do now ? It was almost dark, and that was keeping away the eagles whose cries of rage he could still hear. Holding his precious basket, Jon managed to crawl back and get under a shelf of rock, keeping close to his horse for warmth. There was food left in the pack but he felt too ill to taste it. The many hours of the night seemed endless.

Then Jon had a strange dream. He dreamed that the great, golden eagle came down to earth with a buzzing noise near him at the cliff's foot. Two small beings riding on its back came over to him. They worked at his arm, bound bandages on his head, and gave him a hot drink. How good it tasted, how sweet ! He opened his eyes to see the two strangers by his side and his father with them, looking troubled.

It was old Jon Vekelof who rode the pony home. Young Jon was taken in the plane. He did not leave his bed for many days and a doctor, called from the town, said his escape had been a narrow one. The first day he was able to sit in an armchair by the log fire, Wilfrid Green, the naturalist[10] and collector, spread money all over the table for Jon to see.

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[10] naturalist ·· one who studies plants, animals etc.

" These are for you, " he said.

" That is too much, " said the boy. I could not take all of it."

The tall American touched his shoulder. "Take it for your father's sake, and your pony's," he said. " You had the courage of an eagle, boy. "

Jon thanked him and grinned warmly. Who wouldn't have taken a chance for a pony like Ingeborg ?

(Simplified from Laura Benet)

Comprehension Questions :

1. Why did the pleasant room seem dull to Jon ?
2. Why had the two Americans come to Jon's house?
3. Why did Jon turn down the idea of going in the plane to collect the eggs?
4. Describe briefly how Jon climbed the cliff and collected the eggs?
5. How did the boy save the eggs from the eagles' attack ?
6. How was Jon rescued by his father and the Americans ?
7. What idea of life in Iceland do you get from this story ? Give a brief description.

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10. A VOTE FOR ABE LINCOLN[1]

Sam Adams climbed to the wagon seat and spoke to the oxen. His father was out of sight now, over the hill, heading for the wheatfield. Sam looked back and waved to his mother.

She waved anxiously. " Hurry now, Sam! " she called. " You know how much that wheat means to your father. If those cattle get in before he gets the fence up—! " She left the sentence unfinished.

" I'll get there, mother," he called back. " Don't worry."

But he couldn't help worrying himself. A herd of cattle was warned heading towards their wheatfield. That wheatfield meant everything to his father, to the whole family. If anything happened to it, they won't have food next winter.

He tried to get the oxen to move faster. But the road was narrow and muddy.

Finally, the wagon came within sight of the field. Sam could see his father riding along the far edge. But then the left wheels sank deep in the mud.

Sam lifted his head, opened his mouth to call for his father to come and help. The shout died in his throat. Beyond the wheatfield he saw moving cattle, a hundred head or more. They were coming steadily on towards the wheatfield.

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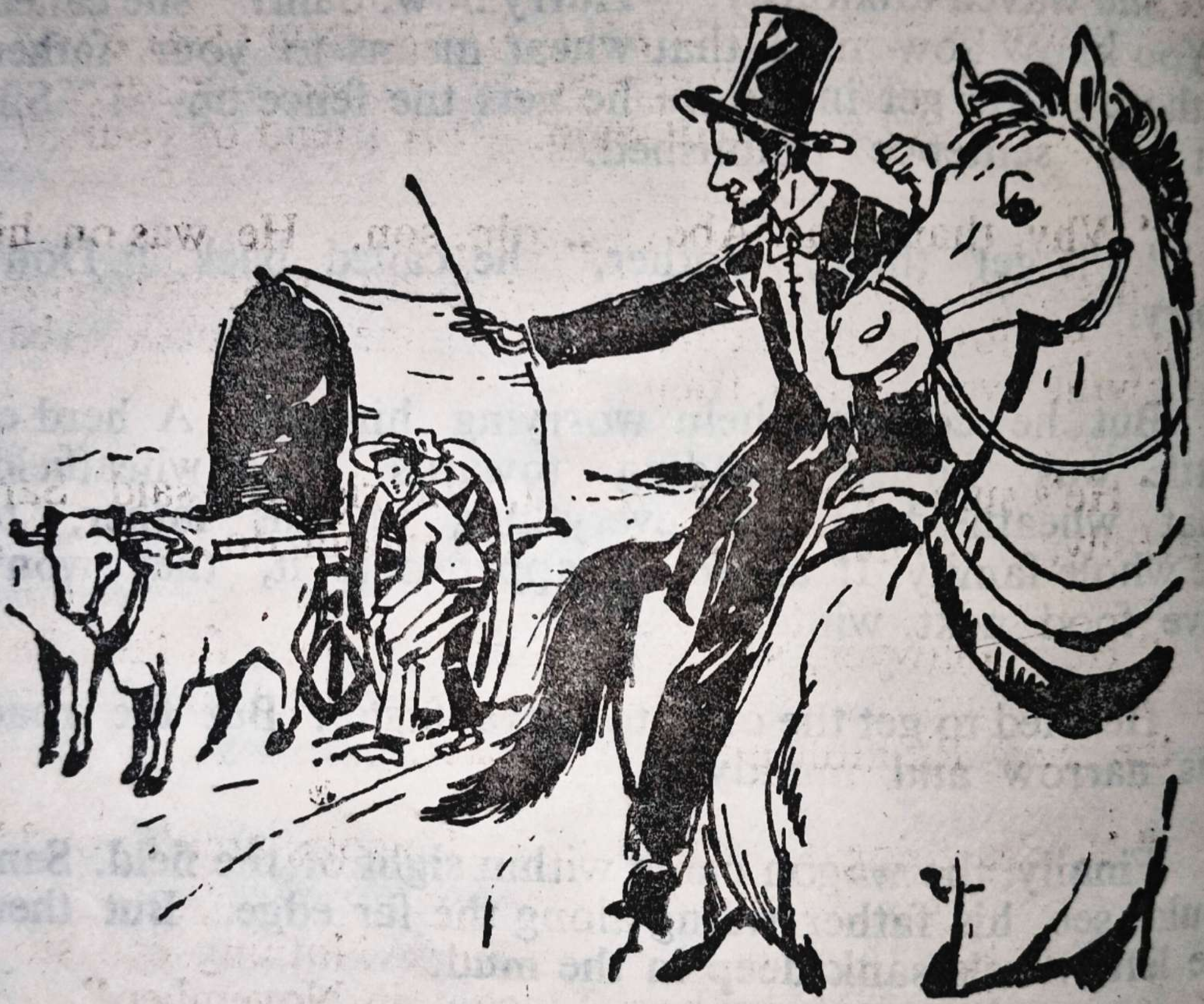
[1] **Abe Lincoln :** Abraham Lincoln, American President from 1861 to 1865 who abolished slavery in the country.

As he got down from the wagon seat, he heard the familiar beat of a horse's hoofs behind. Some one was coming down the road !



" Don't worry, son !" said the man on horseback. Cover up your wheels and put rails under them. I'll help drive away the cattle."

Sam did not have time to see what the man looked like. He was tall and thin. But in driving the cattle, he was clever and successful. Soon he and Sam's father had managed to drive them away from the wheat.

When Sam looked up again, the stranger had climbed on his horse and was riding off down the road.

Mr. Adams crossed the field towards his son. He was wiping his face with a large handkerchief.

" That was sure close, son," he said, coming up to the wagon. "If it hadn't been for Abe, we'd have lost the wheat, sure. I never could have driven them away alone."

" Abe who ? " asked Sam. " A friend of yours ? "

" Why, that was Abe Lincoln, son. He was on his way back to Springfield after making a speech some place. As for being a friend of mine, . I guess Abe's just about everybody's friend."

" He's sure was our friend, all right," said Sam gratefully. " What does this Abe Lincoln do ? "

" He's a lawyer, son; in politics, too. In fact, he's just been nominated for the presidency of the United States on the new Republican Party ticket."

" You're going to vote for Mr. Lincoln, aren't you ? "

" You bet I'll vote for him, Sam. Nothing can stop me from voting for Abraham Lincoln, in November."

But something did stop Henry Adams from voting for Abraham Lincoln. In early July he was thrown from a horse and seriously injured. Judith, his young wife, and his son, Sam, were beside him when he died.

Two weeks later Sam answered a knock at the door. Two men stood outside.

" This the Adams farm ?" asked one.

" Yes, sir. Will you come in ?" Sam answered.

" Who is it, Sam ?" called his mother.

" I'm Joe Winship," said the taller of the two strangers. " And this is my partner, Jerry Hogan. We've brought you a letter from Mr. Abe Lincoln."

" From Abe Lincoln ?" she took it wonderingly. ' Why, it's addressed to both of us, Sam."

" To me, too ?" asked Sam eagerly. " Open it, mother. What does it say ?"

His mother opened the letter and read it.

" God bless Abe Lincoln," she said softly. " It's a beautiful letter."

" What does it say ?" asked Sam eagerly.

" It says," replied his mother gently, " that Mr. Lincoln is deeply sorry to learn of your father's going. And he hopes we'll be kind enough to let these two friends of his, Mr. Winship and Mr. Hogan, work out their debt to him for legal work by helping us with the farm work for a spell ."

" And Sam," said his mother, " there is a note for you."

The boy took the page eagerly. It read: " Sam, I used to hear your father talk about what a fine, good boy you were. He was very proud of you. I know he's glad you're there to take care of your mother. Don't ever give up if you should get stuck in the mud again. There's always a way out. Something or someone will come along to help, if you just keep trusting the Almighty."

In November, Sam Adams took the wheat into Springfield to sell. It was still early morning when he rolled into Springfield. There were a lot of people going to town more than he'd ever seen before. The streets of the little town hummed[2] with excitement.

Then a group of men marched down the street bearing banners. The banners said : "Elect Stephen Douglas President."

Sam knew then why there were so many people here in Springfield today. It was election day — the day the people voted for President of the United States.

Well, he was here now, luckily. Sam got a better price for the wheat than he had expected.

He asked the way to the nearest polling place. The town hall was the closest, someone said.

The street outside the town hall was crowded. "Where do people go to vote ?" Sam asked a man.

"Just follow the crowd," answered the man waving a hand.

Sam hurried past men. There were little booths[3] in the room where people voted. As soon as one man left one of the booths, another man went in. Sam waited patiently for his chance. At the first opportunity he went into a booth.

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[2] hum : make noise like a bee

[3] booth : small enclosure

"Hey!" said a voice. "A kid went in that booth! Take him out."

They took him out. "But—but I want to vote," pleaded Sam. "I want to vote for Mr. Lincoln."

A man laughed. "But you're not old enough to vote, kid. You have to be twenty-one in order to vote." He gave him a push.

Sam picked himself up from the street outside. His best pants were torn. His hat had fallen into the gutter. His knees and one elbow were scratched but worst of all was the way he felt inside He'd failed. Failed both his father and Mr. Lincoln.

He got up and picked his hat out of the gutter. It was muddy. His eyes filled with tears.

A heavy hand fell on his shoulder. Sam looked up, startled.

"Please, mister. I am not doing anything. I'm going now."

"What's the trouble, son?"

"Please, mister," he cried. "I didn't know it was wrong. I was just trying to help make Mr. Lincoln President. He's so good. I was going to vote for my father. He can't vote for Mr. Lincoln though he wanted to, because—because—he's dead."

"What was your father's name, son?"

"Henry Adams."

"I knew your father, son. He was a fine man."

"But my father, is going to feel bad, on account of not casting his vote for Mr. Lincoln," said Sam.

"Is he?" said the man softly. "I haven't voted yet myself. I was debating about the matter. You see, I'm not completely convinced that Abe Lincoln is the man for President."

"But he is."

"Well," the tall man said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll go in and vote for Lincoln for your father's sake."

Sam's face became bright. "That's sure fine of you."

He watched the tall, thin figure mount the steps. He seemed to know a great many people, for he spoke to nearly everyone, nodding and smiling.

It was getting late. Sam hurried along the street to the general store to buy a present for his mother. The store was crowded. Sam had to wait a long time. He came out, his arms full of packages, and went to find the wagon.

As he started up, he saw people in excitement. People were cheering and shouting. Towering above the crowd was the man Sam had persuaded to cast his father's vote. Quickly he leaned down and called to a boy his own age, who was standing near the wagon.

"Can you tell me what that man's name is ? That tall one ?"

The boy stared. "You must be from the country. Everybody in Springfield knows Abe Lincoln !"

(*Simplified from Milton Richards*)

Comprehension Questions :

1. Why was the wheatfield very important to the Adams family ?
2. Why was Sam Adams unable to go and help his father in driving away the cattle ?
3. How did Abe Lincoln help the Adams family after the death of Henry Adams ?
4. What did Lincoln write to Sam Adams ?
5. Describe briefly how Sam Adams tried to vote for Abe Lincoln.
6. How did Sam Adams persuade the tall man to vote for Abe Lincoln ?
7. What idea of Lincoln's character do you get from the story ? Describe it in a paragraph.

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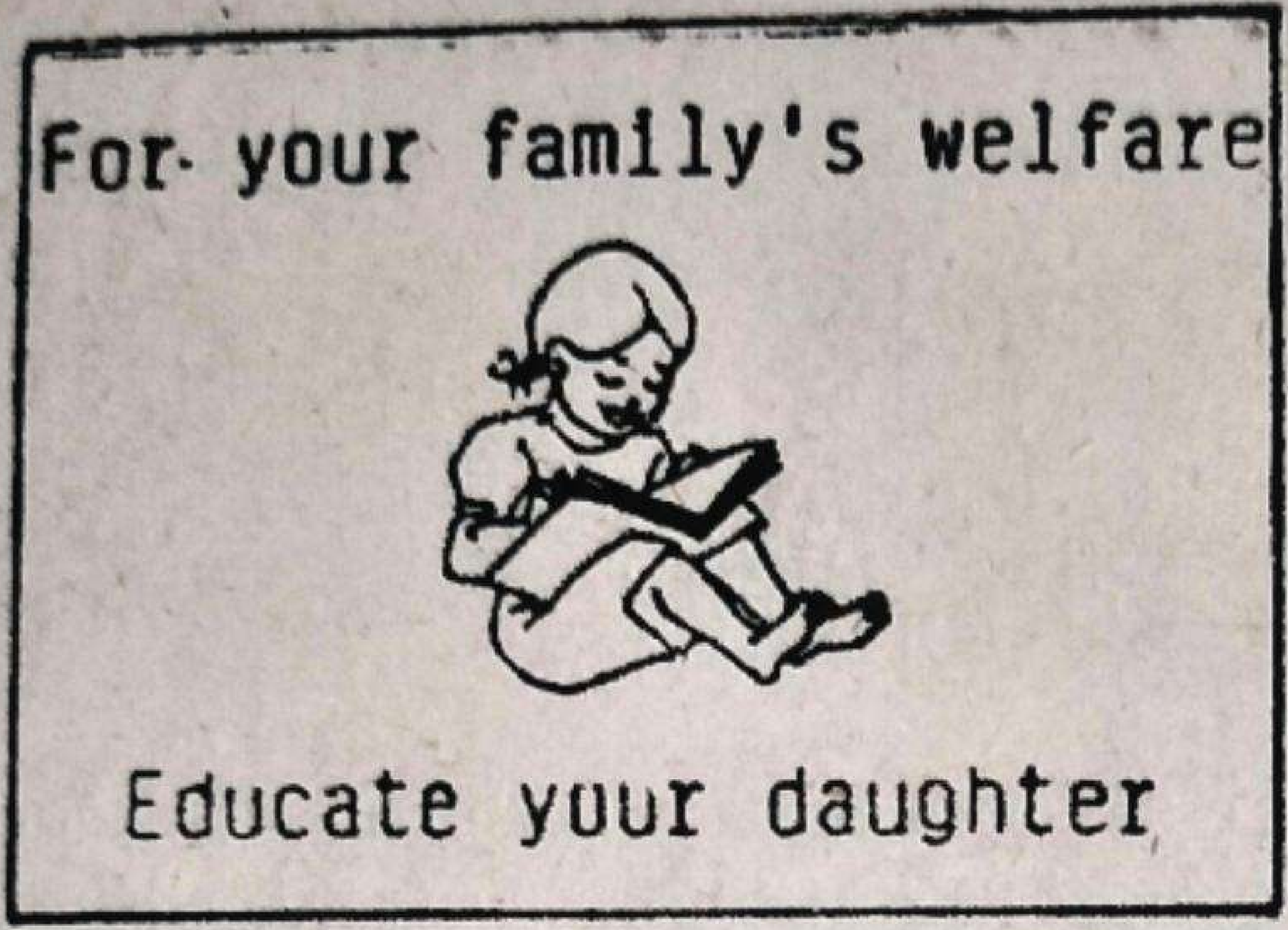
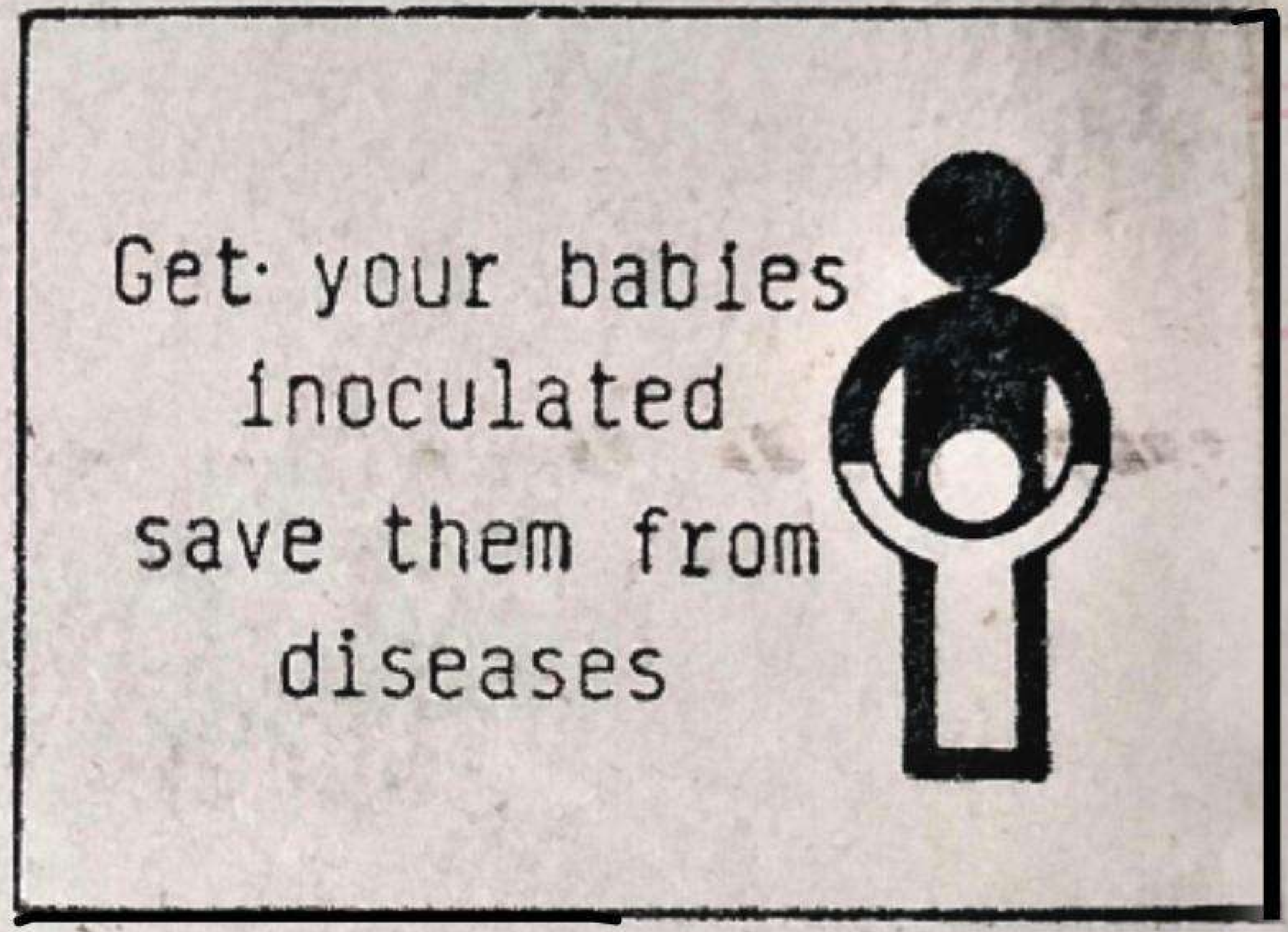

For your family's welfare
Educate your daughter

For Good eye sight
eat leafy vegetables

Water from a hand-pump is
protected
water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